A SKETCH OF ANGLO-INDIAN LITERATURE

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(The Le Bas Prize Essay for 1907)

By

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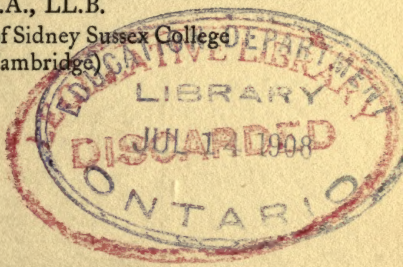

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GRADUALLY, year by year, the ranks of our Anglo-Indian writers swell, and new works are thrown with eager anxiety on the wide sea of literature and authorship. We have often wished that a full list of them all could be made out and continually supplemented as occasion required. A dictionary of Anglo-Indian writers, or a history of Anglo-Indian literature, would form a subject of immense interest and instruction, not merely to the griffin or the *littérateur*, who makes India and Indians his interested or idle study, but to the student who wishes to turn over a new page in the history of the human mind and the English language and thought in a country where circumstances, associations, and ties are so very different from those of every other land.—*The Calcutta Review*, 1855.

To
My Mother

PREFATORY NOTE

THE subject for the Cambridge University Le Bas Essay Prize for 1907 was as follows: "An Appreciation of the chief Productions of Anglo-Indian Literature in the Domain of Fiction, Poetry, the Drama, Satire, and Belles-Lettres, during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, with an Estimate of the Chief Writers in those Spheres, and a Consideration of the specially Anglo-Indian Features of the Literature."

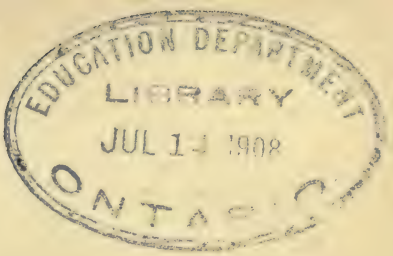
The subject, as compared with those of previous Le Bas Prize Essays, was a wide one, too wide, perhaps, for the subject of a mere essay. But the author's difficulties were increased in another way. Not only was the field vast; but he could obtain little help from predecessors in the field. No book exists that deals comprehensively with the subject. Histories of modern English literature are singularly destitute of any allusion to Anglo-Indian productions.

This *Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature*,

dealing though it does with a subject of such wide scope, and partaking, too, so largely of the nature of pioneer work, has yet perforce been the product of spare hours snatched from ordinary University routine. Under these circumstances, no one will expect to find the essay based entirely on original reflection and judgment. For that a lifelong acquaintance with India and Indian authors were necessary. But the writer was fortunate in finding ready to his hand a rich mine of information which well repaid research. He takes this opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness to *The Calcutta Review*, whose literary criticism has, ever since the magazine was founded in 1845, maintained a high degree of refinement and insight, while it has done Anglo-Indian literature an immense service by continually pointing out to Anglo-Indian writers the true aim which Anglo-Indian literature must always set before itself. Its literary judgments, in the case of those less important writers with whom time rendered an intimate acquaintance impossible, he has not scrupled to adopt.

Since the adjudication the essay has been considerably enlarged, and is now published in accordance with the rules governing the scheme of the Le Bas Essay Prize.

For courteous permission to include extracts from the works of which they are respectively authors or publishers, acknowledgments are due to the Right Hon. Sir A. C. Lyall, G.C.I.E., author of *Verses Written in India*, Mr Rudyard Kipling and the publishers of his poetical works, Messrs Methuen and Co., Mr John Lane, publisher of Mr Le Gallienne's *Rudyard Kipling: a Criticism*, and Messrs W. Thacker and Co., publishers of Aliph Cheem's *Lays of Ind.*



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A SKETCH OF ANGLO-INDIAN LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

Introduction

We look before and after
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.—SHELLEY.

THE era of the world's history which came to an end with the close of the nineteenth century is justly regarded as not the least remarkable in the story of mankind. The immense advance which human thought, human knowledge, and human power over nature achieved during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is the commonplace of lecturer, orator, and writer alike. To the eye of the statesman, however, two political phenomena stand out as of paramount importance. The one is the birth and growth of that modern

radicalism, both in politics and in thought, which in the catastrophe of 1789 caricatured itself before a startled world; the other is the rise and extension of the British Empire. The one has found a host of interpreters from Voltaire and Rousseau downwards; the other has been almost voiceless. But if the Empire as an organic whole has been slow to body forth its imperial spirit in literary form, its scattered members have never ceased to strive to interpret their own corner of the globe both to themselves and to those at home. Australia, Canada, India, South Africa, each has its local literature, rich or meagre, as the case may be. It is with the literary strivings of that political solecism which we call Anglo-India that the present essay deals.

History, ancient or modern, contains no exact parallel to the British occupation and administration of India; and the awakening of the nations of the East precludes the probability of such a parallel in the future. The distance of India from England, and the almost complete severance of the British in India from active interest in home affairs, has in the past made India some-

thing more to the Anglo-Indian than Sicily or Asia Minor was to the Roman Governor, a mere stepping-stone in the path of his political career. On the other hand, climatic and other considerations must always make India something less than a home for the British administrators of India. And so, during the last hundred or hundred and fifty years, the unique spectacle has presented itself of a mere handful of men administering a tract of land vastly superior to their own country both in population and extent, living in a land which could never be their home, and yet cut off by distance from all but a sentimental interest in the affairs of their native land.

When a colony becomes a nation, it generally becomes the parent of a literature. But inasmuch as the British community in India is neither a colony nor a nation, but little more, relatively, than a garrison, the great literary question for Anglo-Indians was whether they should be content to import their literature, like other luxuries of life, from the home country, or should attempt to supplement it with writings of their own. They chose

the latter alternative, and the very nature of the case made their choice practically inevitable. On the one hand was a community of men and women, ever being recruited in a never-ending stream, sprung from a land whose people were then, and had been for some centuries before, producing what is probably the greatest literature on earth. Face to face with these, on the other hand, was the land of India, with all its marvels and its beauties. In India for the first time since the era of Asiatic Hellenism, the spirit of Western Literature came into vital contact with the imaginativeness, dreaminess and mysticism of the Oriental temperament. There was no real union between them; and yet it was impossible that each should remain unaffected by the other. Such a meeting, though it was long sterile of result, could not remain permanently so. New conditions produced new emotions, and new emotions always call for new literary interpretation. And so there grew up in British India a literature, English in form and language, which is unique among the literatures of the world. In bulk, relatively to the size of the community

which produced it, it may challenge comparison with any. Its general merit, both absolute and relative, it is the partial purpose of this essay to elucidate. Its list of great names is admittedly short; but whether that list is shorter than, relatively to the size of the Anglo-Indian community, it should have been, may well be doubted, though the question need not be discussed at present. Suffice here to say that too many of the Anglo-Indian writers ignored the true ideal which a living Anglo-Indian literature must always keep in view. Anglo-Indians have always felt themselves to be a distinct community, possessing something which in a nation is called a national spirit. The expression of that spirit as well as that of their adopted country has been the predominant aim and chief *raison d'être* of their literature. And more than that, in those cases where it has failed to strike a lofty or universal note, it is its only justification. Too often their writers have lost sight of that aim, and, like Bunyan's Hypocrisy and Formalism, have wandered in by-ways, until they lost themselves in the rocks and forests of inanity and purpose-

lessness; but the greater names among them are the names of those who realized what their true purpose was, and set themselves to achieve it.

Few who have visited India can have remained unstirred in imagination by the varying phases presented both by nature and by man in that land; and the halo of romance with which the mind instinctively encircles the name of India, though largely dissipated by actual acquaintance, seldom wholly fades, and always tends to inspire the visitor with a desire to give concrete expression to his thoughts and imaginings. For India is truly rich in all that is calculated to reveal any literary bent which a man may possess. Her flora and fauna, both of exquisite beauty and infinite variety, have inspired the poet to sing as well as the scientist to classify. Her mountains comprise, among others, the mightiest of earth's ranges, whose yet unconquered peaks still fling defiance from their snow-clad summits. Ganges, again, the holy and the revered, to mention one only of all her stately rivers, has inspired more odes than sandy Tiber itself, or any other stream of

classic fame. None, too, can regard without emotion the struggle and clash of race with race and creed with creed which India has always known. The outward sign of the warring of race with race the iron hand of autocracy represses; but the battle of creeds is perhaps destined never to die out from the congenial soil of India. Brahmanism stalks triumphant through the greater part of the land, still faintly redolent of the Buddhism that once bade fair to oust it; Buddhism, all but driven from the land of its birth, finds in Ceylon its final bulwark, compelled in India, alone of all the great Asiatic countries, to hide its minished head; Mahometanism, vastly outnumbered, yet vigorous and strong, lives here side by side with the infidel, unable to seek to convert by the sword even though it would. Last and most recent addition of all, Christianity has entered the battle with its universal onslaught, magnificent in its daring, upon all alike. Well may this India, battle-ground of religions now as of old, stir to his depths the student of humankind. Poets have felt the stimulus alike of the higher and the lower side of its religious life; the Vedic

hymns, the noble conception of Nirvana, and the lofty maxims of ancient Buddhism, alike with the system of caste, the heroically-diabolical convention of Suttee, the religious aspect of Thuggism, and the mysterious knavery of Fakirism, all have fired the imaginations of men. And, last of all, what could be more calculated to call forth those deep feelings which underlie much that is great in literature than the conditions of Anglo-Indian life itself? There are certain emotions, which stir men and women to the very heart's core, which are the exception in England but the rule in India. Not without reason did Sir Alfred Lyall call India the " land of regrets." It is a land of " trial and sorrow and woe, the land of tall black monuments and vainly-proud sepulchral processions";* it is a land that makes widows and orphans, that " breaks hearts and drives men mad "; it is, finally, a land that puts asunder those whom God has joined. To save the delight of his eyes the Anglo-Indian must be willing to lose it; the father knows that he must one day part with his children; the husband,

Calcutta Review.

that he must send away his wife, while he stays on in weary exile; eagerly he postpones the evil day while he may, knowing that it is inevitable unless he would see the bloom fade off the cheeks of both. The wife at Simla, or some hill station of less repute, eats the bread of anxiety, while her husband toils in the plains below; but hides her care beneath a mask of gaiety. Such emotions are an accepted part of the life of the Anglo-Indian community, and have left a vital impress upon its literature. Had that literature failed in all else, it might have been expected that it would have found success at least in threnody; and though no Jeremiah or Moschus arose to place the story of their miseries on the permanent roll of the world's literature, yet the sense of their exile and their sorrows has pervaded the greater part of Anglo-Indian writings, and many poets have mourned in dirges of more than mediocre power.

And yet, despite all the beauty, the mystery, and the tragedy of life in India, despite all the themes for song and speculation and all that is calculated to foster literary genius, none but the most biased

critic could possibly grow enthusiastic with regard to the general mass of the imaginative writings of Anglo-Indians. Mediocrity has in general been too fatally present, the appeal to the universal too fatally absent. Their writers are unfortunate in having to be judged by the high standard to which English literature attained during the two centuries under review. Many Anglo-Indians would stigmatize such a comparison, and not without reason, as essentially unfair; but since so many of their writers deliberately challenged it by appealing primarily to the public at home and only secondarily to the Anglo-Indian community, instead of being content, like their greatest genius, to seek first of all an Indian reputation, they cannot complain if they meet with the criticism thus openly invited. And criticism they have received, sometimes fair, often unfair, when the critic ignored the special difficulties of the Anglo-Indian writer. These are many and great, and an appreciation which is coupled with a true comprehension of their hampering effect will be the more valuable.

" Necessity is the mother of invention,"

says the proverb. So, too, is desire of fame. Both of these motives combined or not combined with the promptings of real genius have led men and women in all ages to write down the thoughts of their hearts and give them to the world. In India the first motive has often been absent. Seldom in India do Englishmen find themselves in such a position that their pen alone stands between themselves and beggary. Literature in India was, until comparatively recently, seldom a profession. When a man goes to India, whether he be soldier, civilian, professional man, or trader, it is almost always to take up a post already arranged for him, of which the emoluments are sometimes ample, and seldom grossly insufficient. If he dabbles in literature, it is but his exhausted energies that he gives to it. Desire of literary fame may urge him on, but he lacks that stimulating influence which has supplemented the genius of so many of our English authors. It can, indeed, be urged with truth that this circumstance applied with far greater potency in the earlier days of Anglo-Indian literature than at the present time, when the growth of the

newspaper and the magazine has created a permanent journalistic class in India; but in a country so enervating and so productive of sloth it can never be without its influence.

Carlyle tells us that when the poet Burns dared to be original in his work of beer-gauging, quick and sharp came the message from the excise authorities: "You must work, not think!" Speculators, in seeking for the causes of the comparative barrenness of literary genius in Anglo-Indians, have attributed it to the despotic character of the government, which formerly discouraged that free discussion of public questions which begets and is itself begotten by a healthy and strong literature; and to the fear which in early days at least was very real and justified, that their exercises in the domain of literature would act as a bar to their advancement in life, either by unsuiting them for their workaday life, or by leading the dispensers of patronage to think they were thus unsuited. Lord William Bentinck, a utilitarian among utilitarians, always considered that literary attainments and excellence in dry

official routine could not be happily combined in the same person; and was only converted from his opinion by the talented work both with the pen and with the staff of justice of H. M. Parker, the versatile author of the *Draught of Immortality*, and the clever miscellany called *Bole Ponjis*. Again, the literary critic of *The Calcutta Review*, writing ten years before the Mutiny, made the lamentable confession that "the fact stands out in all the nakedness of metaphysical abstraction, that the dignity of literature, if not contemned, is viewed with indifference in India, and that literary pretensions are seldom or never a passport to preferment." Finally, it is little more than twenty years ago since all India was laughing, with understanding, at the tale of Boanerges Blitzen, whose "prospects were so bright, till an Indian paper found that he could write," though it is perhaps only fair to add here, as the author did, that it was because he "told the tactless truth," not because he succeeded in literature, that his prospects suddenly became so dark.

Lastly, literature was hampered by the

very conditions of Anglo-Indian life. Not only was the Anglo-Indian circle of readers small, but it tended to divide into two main sections, the very idle and the very busy. At home it is the class between the two which is the support of literary men. It is the hard-working man with a fair amount of leisure who is the real patron of literature. And it is the same in India. It is the comparative rarity of this class that has helped to handicap the authors who wrote for it. And when to all these obstacles we add the inherent practicality of the Anglo-Indian, who always felt that he was in India to work and not to imagine sentimental thoughts, and the fleeting nature of the audience, ever being recruited from England, we may be pardoned for wondering that a strong local literature ever grew up at all.

Nevertheless, in spite of every hampering influence, Anglo-Indian literature slowly acquired bulk and quality. Hindering circumstances were modified or lost their power. The conditions under which it was fostered left a permanent mark upon the literature. The scenery, the native life, and

the religions of India have all found expression in Anglo-Indian writings, but it is the poem of the domestic affections, as exemplified in Heber's short poem to his wife, that appears most frequently. Neither its prose nor its poetry is often free from the exile's lament; for, ever and anon, comes the note of sadness, even as of old the Jews sat them down and wept, asking: " How shall we sing in a strange land? " The essayists and novelists seldom escape it, and even in the professedly satiric or humorous writers we often meet it, for in India, comedy and tragedy are very near to one another. The light and shade of Indian life provides a multitude of themes alike for the dramatist, the essayist, the novelist and the poet; but if India gives much, she robs even while she gives.

CHAPTER II

Beginnings—Jones and Leyden

Missus in hanc venio timide liber exulis urbem.
—Ovid, *Tristia.*

ANGLO-INDIAN literature may be said to have been born in 1783, the year of the arrival in India of Sir William Jones, the great Orientalist, who became the first Anglo-Indian poet. Prior to that date it cannot be said to have existed,* unless we except certain rather crude volumes of travel and letters devoid in the main of any literary merit. The history of preceding years tells of battle and warfare, of massacre and revenge, of intrigue and counter-intrigue, of the struggle of two white nations for the prize of the jewel of the East, of the victory of the disciplined few over the unwieldly many, of the slowly

*Alexander Dow's tragedy *Zingis*, produced at Drury Lane in 1769, and his more famous *History of Hindustan*, deserve mention as exceptions to the generalization.

extending grip which never relaxed. It was a time in which the pen had to give place to the sword, as Clive, to his own and his nation's great advantage, discovered early. Literature, ever the handmaid of peace rather than of war, could find no place amid the clash of arms. Men had no time to cultivate their imagination, or, if they had, lacked the ability to express their thoughts. It was not till 1782 that India could boast its first newspaper.* So far was the exile community removed in literary progress from the brilliance and fecundity of contemporary literature at home.

The thirty years which followed the arrival of Sir William Jones in India, contain the name of only one other man of literary genius, John Leyden, the Orientalist and lyric poet, who reached India in 1803 and died in 1811. These two remarkable men, Sir William Jones and John Leyden, were practically the only men of literary power whom England gave to her great dependency until the third decade of the nineteenth century. To this generalization it may be claimed by some that an

*Hickey's *Bengal Gazette*.

exception is to be found in Hugh Boyd, the writer of the essays on literary and moral subjects in the *Hircarrah*, or Messenger, a periodical which he founded. But Boyd, to whom many a finger pointed as the reputed author of *The Letters of Junius*, was so impregnated with the coffee-house tradition of Steele and Addison, so entirely unaffected in imagination or in thought by the new and strange conditions of Indian life and nature, that his writings cannot truly be classed as Anglo-Indian. One who had never stirred beyond sight of St Paul's would have found the writing of them no very difficult task. A review of Anglo-Indian literature may safely neglect him.

Anglo-Indian literature, then, begins with the names of two poets, Jones and Leyden. It has been not a little aptly remarked that the early literature of British India consisted, like that of all nations, in poetry. Anglo-Indian literature, however, is not the literature of a young nation, but an offshoot from the literature of an older nation, transplanted to foreign soil. If it did not, like Athena from the head of Zeus, spring to the birth full-grown, it yet had

not to pass through those preliminary stages which are apparent in the rude reliques of English ballad poetry, and which we postulate as a necessary antecedent of an *Iliad*. But though the statement needs this correction of view, it is none the less true, and it is at least curious that, with a few unimportant exceptions, the whole of the imaginative literature of British India until the fourth decade of the nineteenth century consisted of poetry.

Sir William Jones was primarily a lawyer and an Orientalist, and only secondarily a poet. He set sail for Calcutta in 1783, in order to take up a position as Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William. He immediately employed his talents in scientific and linguistic research, and became the founder and first president of " The Calcutta Society." Proceeding to apply and extend the already great Oriental knowledge which he had acquired by study in England, he travelled constantly and drank deep of the well of Eastern romance and mysticism. From time to time he attempted to distil forth in poetry, for the benefit of English readers, something of

the draught he had sipped. This he was by no means ill-equipped to do; for both at Harrow and at Oxford, as well as in his subsequent life, he had gained some definite, if small, reputation as a pleasant and clever versifier. Many of these early productions, like *Solima*, *The Palace of Fortune* and *The Seven Fountains*, were suggestive of the Oriental atmosphere which he was so well qualified to create, even before he set foot on the shores of India. Perhaps the most famous of these early poems is the *Ode in Imitation of Alcæus*, written in 1781. In it he asks, "What constitutes a State?" He asks whether it is "high-raised battlement, or laboured mound," "thick wall or moated gate"; whether we are to find it in "cities proud with spires and turrets crowned," in

> bays and broad-armed ports
> Where laughing at the storm rich navies ride,

or in

> starred and spangled courts,
> Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.

Clear and unequivocal comes the answer, universally and undyingly true, forgotten in the past to the ruin of many a mighty

people, never to be forgotten by a people desirous of retaining place among the nations of the world:

No! Men, high-minded Men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued
In forest, brake, or den,
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude;
Men who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain;
These constitute a state.

In concluding, he asks the question:

Shall Britons languish and be Men no more?
Since all must life resign,
Those sweet rewards, which decorate the brave,
'Tis folly to decline
And steal inglorious to the silent grave.

Such was the spirit which Jones carried into his Indian life. Duty was with him the great law, idleness the great sin. Sir Edward Coke, the famous lawyer, had said:

Six hours to sleep, to law's grave study six,
Four spend in prayer, the rest on nature fix.

"Rather," said Jones:

Six hours to law, to soothing slumbers seven,
Ten to the world allot, and all to heaven. *

*Versions of these two couplets exist which slightly

The poems on which Sir William Jones's position among Anglo-Indian literary men must be judged are *The Enchanted Fruit* or *Hindu Wife;* a number of translations from the Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic, chief among which is a translation of Sakuntala, the masterpiece of the great Sanskrit poet, Calidasa, and various hymns to Hindu deities. In all these, though throughout he maintains a certain level of poetical ability, he seldom betrays signs of genius, and it is peculiarly in keeping with the character of Sir William Jones's poetic power that his most famous lines are a translation, or at least an adaptation. The thought is borrowed, yet in clothing it in English dress, he has, like Fitzgerald, in his poem on Omar, added something to its charm. The lines are but a tetrastich:

> On parent knees, a naked new-born child
> Weeping, thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled.
> So live that, sinking in thy last long sleep,
> Calm thou mayst smile, while all around thee weep.

differ from these as regards verbal detail. I give them as they appear in Macaulay's Essay on Samuel Johnson, where the unhappy Croker receives castigation for his inability to see the point of the second.

The Enchanted Fruit, the longest of Jones's strictly Anglo-Indian original poems, is what the poet himself calls an "antediluvian" tale. The poem tells how five brothers, husbands of one wife, go out with her to a fruit-tree, and one of them shoots down the solitary fruit hanging upon it sixty cubits from the ground. They are immediately informed by Krishna that it belongs to a pious Muny, and are bidden to replace it under penalty of dire destruction. If all of them will confess their sins truly and faithfully, it will be replaced. The first brother immediately confesses and is followed by the others. At each confession the fruit rises ten cubits in the air, and when the turn of the wife comes it is hanging but ten feet from the bough. She confesses to talking scandal, and the fruit rises, alas, but eight feet, for she is reserving something. The brothers urge her to confess all in order to save their lives, and at last she reluctantly makes the alarming admission that she allowed her Brahmin tutor to "kiss her cheek." At once the fruit springs to the bough, and their lives are saved.

Sir William Jones's translations are al-

ways elegant and often beautiful. The exquisite tetrastich from the Persian has already been noticed. In an adaptation from the Arabic addressed to Lady Jones he compares his anxiety during separation from her to the yearning of chicks for the parent bird:

> Two younglings wait the parent bird
> Their thrilling sorrows to appease:
> She comes—ah! no! the sound they heard
> Was but a whisper of the breeze.

Jones's longest and most sustained effort, however, in the sphere of translation, was his translation of *Sakuntala, or The Fatal Ring.*

"Poetry," says a modern epigram, "was the sportful daughter of Valmic, and having been educated by Vyasa, she chose Calidas for her bridegroom after the manner of Viderbha; she was the mother of Amara, Sundar, Sancha, Dhanic; but now, old and decrepit, her beauty faded and her unadorned feet slipping as she walks, in whose cottage does she disdain to take shelter?"* *The Fatal Ring* was the most famous of this Calidas's, or Calidasa's plays,

*Quoted in Sir William Jones's preface to *Sakuntala.*

and Sir William Jones, though in his preface he disclaims any shadow of right to woo the dramatic muse, at least achieves, and more than achieves, his avowed object, of giving English readers an opportunity of judging for themselves the character of the ancient Sanskrit drama.

There are eight Hindu deities whom Sir William Jones addresses in his hymns. They are Camdeo, Pracrite (under the two names, denoting different capacities, Durga and Bhavani), Indra, Surya, Lachsmi, Narayena, Sereswaty and Ganga. In these hymns, if anywhere, Sir William Jones is a poet of genius; for, backed by immense knowledge, and aflame with an intense enthusiasm for his subject, he sometimes attains in them a high degree of poetic power. The greatest of the hymns is undoubtedly that to Narayena, the Spirit of God moving on the Water. Nothing could be finer than the opening exordium:

> Spirit of Spirits, who through every part
> Of space extended and of endless time,
> Beyond the stretch of lab'ring thought sublime,
> Bad'st uproar into beauteous order start,
> Before heaven was, thou art:

Ere spheres beneath us rolled, or spheres above,
Ere earth in firmamental ether hung,
Thou sat'st alone: till through thy mystic love
Things unexisting to existence sprung,
And grateful descant sung.
What first impelled thee to exert thy might?
Goodness unlimited. What glorious light
Thy power directed? Wisdom without bound.
What proved it first? Oh! guide my fancy right;
Oh! raise from cumbrous ground
My soul in rapture drowned,
That fearless it may soar on wings of fire;
For thou, who only know'st, Thou only can'st inspire!

This lofty pitch of thought is maintained throughout. First we are carried back to a time when

Wrapt in eternal solitary shade . . . .
Brehm his own mind surveyed.

Then "swift at his look a shape supremely fair leapt into being." It was Maya, the cosmic illusion. Creation, so the Hindu belief states, is an energy rather than a work, and all our notions of matter are formed while under the deceptive influence of this illusive operation. "By means of Maya, the Infinite Being exhibits to his creatures a set of perceptions, like a wonder-

ful picture or piece of music, always 'varied yet always uniform; so that all bodies and their qualities exist, indeed, to every wise and useful purpose, but exist only so far as they are perceived."* Then follows a wonderful description of the creation, beginning with the time when

> an all-potent all-pervading sound
> Bade flow the waters, and the waters flowed,
> Exulting in their measureless abode,
> Diffusive, multitudinous, profound,
> Above, beneath, around.

Then, as the Hebrews put it, the Spirit of God breathed upon the waters,

> O'er the vast expanse primordial wind
> Breathed gently,—

and the four-formed Godhead, full-gifted Brehma, came forth

> With graceful stole and beamy diadem.

Long, "rapt in solemn thought," stood Brehma, the Creative God, seeking "his viewless origin." But it was all in vain; the curtain was impenetrable; and at last a

*From Sir William Jones's preface to this hymn.

mighty voice, the Unknown All-knowing Word, echoed forth:

> Brehma! no more in vain research persist:
> My veil thou canst not move. Go; bid all worlds exist!

Next, with many a beautiful touch from nature, we learn how, under Maya's influence, all the various phenomena of earth and heaven took shape, for, addressing Narayena, the poet says that,

> In air, in floods, in cavern, woods and plains,
> Thy will inspirits all, thy sovereign Maya reigns.

Finally, in a burst of poetic fervour, he shows that in spite of the beautiful deception of the unrealities which Maya sets before our eyes, he yet can pierce the veil and reach the ultimate realities. Perhaps there is little in Anglo-Indian literature that reaches a higher pitch of descriptive power than the closing verse of this powerful ode:

> Blue crystal vault, and elemental fires,
> That in the ethereal fluid blaze and breathe,
> Thou tossing main, whose snaky branches wreathe
> This pensile orb with intertwisted gyres;
> Mountains whose radiant spires

Presumptuous rear their summits to the skies,
And blend their emerald hue with sapphire light;
Smooth meads and lawns, that glow with varying dyes
Of dew-bespangled leaves and blossoms bright,
Hence vanish from my sight:
Delusive pictures, unsubstantial shows!
My soul absorbed One only being knows,
Of all perceptions One abundant source,
Whence every object every moment flows,
Suns hence derive their force,
Hence planets learn their course;
But suns and fading worlds I view no more:
God only I perceive; God only I adore.

In spite of the rather apparent straining after effect in this passage, it is worthy of a place beside those lines which tell how, like the baseless fabric of the vision conjured up by Ariel at his master's bidding,

The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

Though written from radically opposite points of view, the one negativing the reality of the apparently real, the other the durability of the actually real, these two passages yet give expression to a common

and ineradicable belief of mankind, the belief that the world of matter is neither the permanent nor the ultimate reality, and that there is, after all, something apart from it which is real.

This hymn to Narayena is perhaps Sir William Jones's greatest poetical achievement. The other hymns, though none of them reach so high a level of fervour, and many of them are obscured by too great a mass of detail more in keeping with a monograph than with a poem, yet contain many beautiful descriptions of natural things, and not a few sublime religious conceptions. The closing appeal to Camdeo, the Hindu "Eros," is not without a suggestion of the emotional tenderness of feeling so essential in such a poem:

> Oh! thou for ages born, yet ever young,
> For ages may thy Bramin's lay be sung.
> And when thy lory spreads his emerald wings
> To waft thee high above the towers of Kings,
> Whilst o'er thy throne the moon's pale light
> Pours her soft radiance through the night,
> And to each floating cloud discovers
> The haunts of blest or joyless lovers,
> Thy mildest influence to thy bard impart,
> To warm but not consume his heart.

Another somewhat remarkable hymn is that to Sereswaty, "Sweet grace of Brehma's bed," possessor of the powers of Imagination and Invention, in which the poet tells how, when Brehma "bade airy nothing breathe and bless his power," his consort called into being "young Passions, o'er hearts yet uncreated sure to reign," among them "Hope, that with honey blends the cup of pain." In the hymn to Lachsmi, the Ceres of India, representing the preserving power of nature, the Goddess is greeted as,

> Daughter of Ocean and primeval Night,
> Who fed with moonbeams dropping silver dew
> And cradled in a wild wave dancing light
> Saw'st with a smile new shores and creatures new.

In the hymn to Surya, the Indian Phœbus, occurs a beautiful and suggestive description of the dawn, marred, however, by one incongruous line:

> Ye clouds in wavy wreaths
> Your dusky van unfold;
> O'er dimpled sands, ye surges, gently flow,
> With sapphires edged and gold.
> Loosed-tressed morning breathes,
> And spreads her blushes with expansive glow;
> But chiefly where heaven's opening eye

Sparkles at her saffron gate.
How rich, how regal, in his Orient state!
Ere long he shall emblaze the unbounded sky:
The fiends of darkness yelling fly;
While birds of liveliest note and lightest wing
The rising day-star sing.

On these hymns in the main rests Sir William Jones's reputation as an Anglo-Indian poet. Poetical genius of the highest type he had in but small degree; but in dealing with a purely Oriental subject, such as was the case in his hymns to Hindu deities, talent, backed by profound knowledge, wide experience, and boundless enthusiasm, enabled him to produce an effect akin to that produced by genius. One great defect mars the effectiveness of these poems, an irritating superabundance of pedantic detail, the occurrence of which is the more surprising in that it infringes a principle laid down by Jones himself; for, as he said, "Poetry delights in general images, and is so far from being a perfect imitation, that a scrupulous exactness of descriptions and similes, by leaving nothing for the imagination to supply, never fails to diminish or destroy the pleasure of every

reader who has an imagination to be gratified." These hymns, and to a lesser extent most of Sir William Jones's poetical work, remind the reader, by their combination of suggestive power and petty detail, of those temple friezes which Greek sculpture produced in its age of decline, in which no deity was ever portrayed unless accompanied by the entire array of his appropriate attributes. Despite its defects, however, Jones's Anglo-Indian poetry was a very real achievement, representing, as it did, an honest and by no means unsuccessful attempt to enter fully into the spirit of the religious life of India. The legitimate successor of Sir William Jones was Sir Edwin Arnold. Though Jones was a greater linguist and Orientalist than poet, he yet achieved no mean success in the latter capacity, and deserves the fullest appreciation as the first of those who strove to nurse the feeble infancy of Anglo-Indian letters into a vigorous adolescence.

After the death of Sir William Jones in 1794, Anglo-Indian literature remained practically sterile for the space of nearly ten years. In 1803, however, there arrived

in India one who was in some respects the most remarkable man who ever found a career in India. John Leyden was remarkable not so much for his poetic ability, though that was of no mean order, as for his linguistic attainments, the sheer retentiveness of his memory, the strenuous nature of his life, and his disregard of the conventionalities of life. As a linguist he rivalled, though he did not excel, Sir William Jones. The power of his memory is attested by the story which tells how, when he was at Mysore, two disputants in an argument referred the point at issue (it dealt with a question of history) to him, whereupon he astonished every one and decided the point by quoting verbatim the whole of an Act of Parliament of the reign of James the First, which some years before he had had occasion casually to read.* When obliged by ill-health to keep to his bed, he yet continued to study at least ten hours a day; while his power of concentration is shown by the fact that, in order to qualify for the

*In the matter of feats of this kind, Leyden seems to have been a worthy predecessor of Macaulay, of whom similar anecdotes are narrated.

only post in India to which he could obtain a nomination, he read for and passed the examination for the Edinburgh degree of doctor of medicine in the extraordinary small space of six months. The son of a Scotch shepherd and small farmer, Leyden owed his education in the main to his own efforts. At Edinburgh in his early days his reading was very diffuse, as he acted on the principle, erroneous with most men, that, given the scaffolding, " you can run up the masonry when you please." But in the main he devoted himself to Oriental studies, his one great desire being to emulate Sir William Jones, and to ballad and lyric poetry. In 1800, Leyden took orders and became a preacher. But he was of too restless a disposition to be content with so quiet a life, and three years later, after six months' incredible labour, he qualified as a surgeon,* and obtained a post as such in India.

Leyden arrived in India towards the close of 1803, and at once threw himself with

*Though he passed its qualifying examination, Edinburgh University refused to grant Leyden the degree of M.D., owing to the short space of time which he had devoted to medical study, and he had to seek that degree elsewhere.

ardour into Oriental research, subsequently publishing several books embodying the results of his investigations. But from the standpoint of the present essay his poetry is the more important. Leyden was well qualified to become the second Anglo-Indian poet. By his *Scenes of Infancy*, as well as by *Lord Soulis*, *The Mermaid*, *The Elfin King*, and other poems, he had already obtained a great reputation as a Border balladist. The lyrical imaginativeness of feeling, which was so conspicuous in the *Scenes of Infancy*, he carried with him to India. The result was some very pleasant short poems expressive of the simple emotions of Anglo-Indian life, in addition to a few others inspired from other sources.

In the *Verses*, written at the Isle of Sagur in the mouth of the Ganges, we meet a theme that is not uncommon in later literature. Agonized by some of the cruel things that he saw done at Sagur, the poet cries out:

> On sea-girt Sagur's desert isle
> Mantled with thickets dark and dun,
> May never morn or starlight smile,
> Nor ever beam the summer sun.

For he had seen the mother deposit her babe in the jaws of the crocodile there, and a "victim, wildly dressed," offered amid the braying of brazen timbrels, as a sacrifice to the Evil Power. And then he asks:

> For pomp of human sacrifice
> Cannot the cruel blood suffice
> Of tigers which thine island rears?

At present, however, the stain is indelible:

> Not all blue Ganga's mountain flood,
> That rolls so proudly round thy fane,
> Shall cleanse the tinge of human blood,
> Nor wash dark Sagur's impious stain.
> The sailor journeying on the main
> Shall view from far the dreary isle,
> And curse the ruins of the pile
> Where Mercy ever sued in vain.

In the *Ode on leaving Velore*, the writer first of all tells of the emotions inspired by "Velura's moat-girt towers," and the dread mountain which its awestruck devotees proclaim "the silent throne of Nature's God,"

> On whose granite breast
> The stamp of Buddha's lotus-feet
> The kneeling Hindu views impressed;

wherein, too, is

> The tomb of him who sleeps alone,
> O'er canopied with living stone
> Amid the mountain solitude.

And then creep in the exile's thoughts of home. He wanders round the cliffs and ruined fanes, and at every rock he stops to notice the traces which show the spots "where ancient men have been."

> Yet not for this I muse unseen,
> Beside that river's bed of sand;
> Here first, my pensive soul to cheat,
> Fancy portrayed in visions sweet
> The mountains of my native land.

Other Anglo-Indian odes by Leyden are the *Dirge of the Departed Year*, *Christmas in Penang*, *Verses on the Death of Nelson*, the *Ode on the Battle of Corunna*, and the fine battle-ballad, *The Battle of Assaye*, written in the style in which so true a Borderer as Leyden would naturally treat so stirring a subject:

> Shout, Britons, for the battle of Assaye!
> For that was a day
> When we stood in our array
> Like the lion's might at bay,
> And our battle cry was "Conquer or die."

But it is in his *Ode to an Indian Gold Coin* that Leyden reaches the highest level of poetic feeling. In it he apostrophizes the coin in lines of real sentiment, and betrays those emotions which the Anglo-Indian can seldom crush down. As he gazes at the yellow metal, he contrasts it with the happiness which he has bartered for the coin:

Slave of the dark and dirty mine,
What vanity has brought thee here?
How can I love to see thee shine
So bright, whom I have bought so dear?

And then he puts his gains and losses side by side:

For thee, for thee, vile yellow slave,
I left a heart that loved me true.
I crossed the tedious ocean-wave,
To roam in climes unkind and new.
The cold wind of the stranger blew
Chill on my withered heart—the grave
Dark and untimely met my view—
And all for thee, vile yellow slave.

Finally, in a burst of sorrow, he flings it from him:

From love, from friendship, country, torn,
To memory's fond regrets a prey,
Vile slave, thy yellow dross I scorn;
Go, mix thee with thy kindred clay!

The poem, simple in structure and diction though it is, merits a high place in Anglo-Indian literature as being expressive of those simple sorrowful emotions which are seldom absent from the Anglo-Indian, who has ever felt himself an exile. Many subsequent writers expressed the same simple thought in other language, but few have done it more beautifully than Leyden in this pleasant lyric. The simplicity of the language well agrees with the simplicity of the thought, while the form in which it is expressed adds to the beauty of the idea. If poetry interprets life, this is assuredly poetry.

Leyden's apprehensions of an early death, expressed in this poem as well as in others, were only too well fulfilled. Eight short years of Indian life were all that were given him, and in his death Anglo-Indian literature as well as Anglo-Indian learning suffered a severe blow. Leyden, like Jones, was a greater linguist than poet. Inferior to Jones as a scholar and thinker, he was superior to him in genuine poetic sentiment and skill. In some of his poetry there is a delicacy of touch and tunefulness of ex-

pression which place him in the temple of fame not far below some of the greater lyric poets of England; and though no small part of his poetry is strained and heavy, yet this criticism applies to but few of his Indian pieces. The *Scenes of Infancy*, as his biographer said, rank him beside Campbell, though it has not the finish of *The Pleasures of Hope*. After all, however, Leyden's Indian reputation must rest on the short pieces which he wrote in India, and it is in the shorter pieces that he especially excelled. In tenderness of sentiment, tasteful selection of language and simple emotional power, one or two of the Indian odes may take place among the foremost productions of English, as well as of Anglo-Indian, lyrical poetry. Had longer life been granted to the writer, he might have achieved no mean rank among English men of letters. But it was not to be. John Leyden, was, indeed, as his friend, Sir Walter Scott, said, "a lamp too early quenched."

CHAPTER III

The Lesser Poets

For the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, *Essays in Criticism.*

IN discussing the world's poetry, it is the custom tacitly to set aside by themselves some six or seven giant minds. Homer, Dante, Virgil, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, none may criticize. To seek to dethrone these from their pedestal is an impious act. Next to these, but considerably behind, comes another class, far larger in number, but yet somewhat circumscribed. It is probable that no Anglo-Indian writer can claim admittance to this second circle. It is certain that no more than two have the slightest shadow of claim. Of these two, Sir Edwin Arnold will receive separate treatment, while Mr Kipling's poetry will be discussed together with the rest of his literary work. Sir Edwin Arnold's work

coincided with the growth of interest in Eastern religions; Rudyard Kipling's with the rising tide of imperialistic sentiment. Both of these men the concurrence of the power of the man and the power of the moment helped to place in the forefront of contemporary English literature. As regards the rest of the Anglo-Indian poets, it has sometimes been the power of the man, sometimes the power of the moment, that has been lacking; too often it has been both. In consequence, it is the fate of all the rest of the Anglo-Indian poets to receive the appellation so fatal and yet often so undeservedly contemned, of "minor." Almost all the Anglo-Indian poets must be placed in that category: but they are none the less deserving of mention. They helped to interpret their life and times when there were no others, greater than they, to do so. It is to them, among others, that he must go who seeks to understand the inner life of the times in which they wrote.

Not long after its foundation in 1845, *The Calcutta Review* made the unequivocal assertion, "Poets it is confessed we have not." At the time, when this rather unjust

assertion was made, there were already inscribed on the Anglo-Indian roll of poetic fame the once not unhonoured names of Jones, Leyden, Heber, Derozio, Parker, Richardson and Calder Campbell. Subsequently to this statement, in addition to the two great names already mentioned, Miss Mary Leslie, Mr H. G. Keene, G. P. Thomas, J. B. Norton, C. H. Kelly, and last and greatest of the lesser poets, Sir Alfred Lyall, gained a reputation that was at least considerable, if in many cases fleeting. All these poets, with the certain exception of Heber and Lyall, and the possible exception of Jones, Leyden and Keene, the modern world, even of Anglo-Indians, has practically forgotten. And yet, of these writers, Derozio left behind him work which, in its power of evoking sympathy, in the music of its verse and in the dramatic vividness of its story, has few superiors in Anglo-Indian poetry; Parker, too, produced a poem which into its somewhat Bacchic subject infuses a Horatian enthusiasm which enchains the reader from start to finish; while Miss Leslie and Calder Campbell evinced in all their work a wide

and intelligent sympathy with nature. Of the rest, Mr H. G. Keene, though often rather lifeless, has yet few who excel him in the melody of his poetry and the tastefulness of his diction: and C. H. Kelly, though somewhat devoid of originality, could write in a martial strain with no small effect. Bishop Heber, whose reputation as a poet is mainly English, scarcely deserves a place among Anglo-Indian poets, though probably to the ordinary individual, in an enumeration of Anglo-Indian poets, few names occur to the mind before his. Sir Alfred Lyall is chiefly remarkable for the tunefulness of his verse and his insight into the Hindu character, and will receive fuller discussion later in the chapter. Jones and Leyden, who rank with Lyall as the greatest Anglo-Indian poets after Arnold and Kipling, have already received sufficient attention.

Such is the list of lesser Anglo-Indian poets which confronts the critic. In applying Matthew Arnold's canon, it is impossible to avoid admitting that it is more often the power of the man that has been deficient than the power of the moment. It

is no doubt true that Anglo-Indian writers have been greatly handicapped by the lack of interest of English people in things Indian, and in that sense the power of the moment has been wanting. But in its higher sense it has been continually present. The meeting of the civilisations, the arms and the religions of East and West has always cried aloud for an interpreter, and even though an Arnold and a Lyall answered the call, still continues its demand. The latter-day imperialistic spirit breathed upon India, as upon other parts of the Empire, and a Kipling rose to give it literary expression. But when the catastrophe of 1857 concentrated the eyes of the whole world upon India, and the power of the moment seemed to pulsate throughout the land, the result was little more than an inordinate quantity of firework heroics in imitation epic style, so far as poetry was concerned. Much, it must be admitted, of the poetry of Anglo-India has been poor from sheer lack of ability on the part of the poet. But in spite of its many limitations, one who is content to roam in butterfly-fashion over it, in an appreciative rather

than critical spirit, can find many beauties which deserve to be brought to light, hidden not infrequently behind a rather forbidding exterior.

The poem of the domestic affections, in which term may be included the exile's lament, is very frequently found, expressive as it is of one of the commonest of the emotions of the British community in India. The form it most commonly takes is that of an address by an Anglo-Indian to his wife or children in England. Of this nature are the lines Heber addressed to his wife. He tells how he misses her companionship:

> If thou wert by my side, my love,
> How fast would evening fall
> In green Bengala's palmy grove,
> Listing the nightingale!

And then comes the note of sorrow and endless yearning:

> I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
> My twilight steps I guide;
> But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
> I miss thee from my side.

And in this strain he continues to pour out his lament until he thinks of his lofty

mission and stronger thoughts arise, and he resolves that where duty leads he will follow. To us, reading the lines now, there is a pathetic significance in them, for Bishop Heber died in 1826, three years after reaching India, without ever again seeing the wife to whom he addressed the lines. Another poet who wrote in this key was Richardson, the titles of whose poems, such as *Consolations of Exile*, *A British-Indian Exile to his Distant Children*, *Home Visions*, and other similar works, sufficiently attest the nature of his temperament. One of Richardson's contemporaries was Calder Campbell, who in one of his pieces expresses exactly the opposite point of view:

Oh! do not say 'tis folly, thus to suffer heartfelt pain.
The friends I leave, the friends I love, I ne'er may see again;
Should not the land where I have lived for fifteen years or more
Have made an interest in my heart? I love this Eastern shore!

Some twenty years later, in *The Anglo-Indian Lyre*, W. E. Cantopher gave utterance to the dirge that had by then become so regular a feature of British Indian

poetry, telling with no little power of the sacred place where

> my heart still lingers
> Drawn ceaselessly by hidden fingers,

which within its precincts contains all that is his "by love's most tender tie." But it remained for Trego Webb and Lyall, near the close of the century, to give most pathetic expression to the well-known idea, and for Kipling to put it in its most terrible form. In his *Indian Lyrics*, Trego Webb tells how in his melancholy hour the "happiest of the Western Isles" appears before him in a dream, but alas!

> The sun is set; we'll dream no more;
> Vainly for us the vision smiles.

And then in his despair and acerbity of spirit he challenges "the grave of England's strength and beauty," and at last flings out the splendid and bitter taunt, so instinct with the quintessence of tragedy:

> Thy slaves and not thy sons are we.

In *The Galley Slave*, Kipling has, of course, invested the unending wail with the highest intensity of pain; but perhaps no one has

ever clothed it in more musical, yet at the same time pathetic, verse, than Sir Alfred Lyall. The writer asks:

> What far-reaching Nemesis steered him
> From his home by the cool of the sea?

And quickly comes the reply:

> He did list to the voice of the siren,
> He was caught by the clinking of gold;
> And the slow toil of Europe seemed tiring,
> And the grey of his fatherland cold.
> He must haste to the garden of Circe;
> What ails him, the slave, that he frets
> In thy service? O lady, sans merci!
> O land of regrets!

And now, though he struggle and fret and strive against his bonds, the sentence has been passed upon him, " Too late "; and soon he realizes this, for

> He has found what a blunder his youth is,
> His prime what a struggle, and yet
> Has to learn of old age what the truth is
> In the land of regret.

Lyall's *Land of Regrets* and Kipling's *Galley Slave* are the two poems in which the chafing of Anglo-Indians against the sufferings which " the cruel stepmother of our kind "

inflicts upon them has found its culminating expression. Almost all these poems of lament are tasteful and tender, and deserving of mention as expressive of one phase of Anglo-Indian sentiment; but yet, when we find poet after poet harping on the same chord, we feel inclined to apply to all such utterers of lamentation the remark of the Anglo-Indian critic, about the work of Trego Webb: "We wish that Mr Webb, instead of accentuating and intensifying the sadder features of our life here, had attempted to invest them with a new interest and dignity."

Narrative poets are very frequently met with. In dipping at random into their pages, the seeker finds many a pleasant story told in verse which is at least not without charm and adorned occasionally with an unexpected depth of thought or daintiness of phrase. *The Exile* of R. Haldane Rattray, which appeared about 1830, is an example in point. It is tinged with the gloom which seems so congenial to the Anglo-Indian temperament, though in this case the melancholy arises solely from the plot. The poem is the story of the wreck of the *Athol*,

off the south coast of Africa, mournfully narrated by the sole survivor, who in the wreck had lost all that he loved or cared for. The verse is dull and a little wearying to read, but contains a telling analysis of human despair and a graphic picture of the workings of man's mind in his dark hour. The survivor's first thought was to plunge himself into the boiling surge which has swallowed up his loved one, but he forbears, for he is brave, and

> When all the blandishments of life are gone
> The coward sneaks to death; the brave live on.

And so he lives on, consoled only by the thought that this long, irksome night of wretchedness will one day end, and by his hope of a better world, where

> these dread scenes of mortal strife shall seem
> Some idle working of the brain, a dream,
> A thing of naught, some earthly phantasy,
> Lost in that hour of deep intensity.

The Draught of Immortality, by H. Meredith Parker, was produced about the same time as Rattray's poem. It is a delightful and musical tale of the coming of Wine upon earth, the theme being drawn from

the Mahabharata. " Dius and the Assoors all," who correspond to the Greek Zeus and lesser deities, meet upon Menu mountain, the Indian Olympus, to debate how they may gain " the blest Amreeta, which shall be a Draught of Immortality." Brahmah advises them:

> " Hear me," said Brahmah," Dius and Assoors.
> Ye shall the mountain Mardor take,
> Plunge it into the flaming Ocean,
> And whirl it round with a furious motion,
> Till the solid earth doth reel and shake,
> Whirl it about as the peasants turn
> With rapid hand the smoking churn;
> Whirl it about and your toil shall earn
> The Amreeta Cup—the glorious prize."

And the gods hearkened and obeyed. Prodigious deeds of strength and toil were done around and underneath the mount. At last arose the Ceres of the East, the peerless Lachsmi, from the surfy foam. And as she rose, glorious goddess of the lotus-throne, the moonlight sky turned rosy red, and a crimson flush o'erspread the sea, like the flaming rays of Surya, when Himalayan snows reflect the glare from their " spotless bed," and cause a bright beam to spread to

the purple West. And side by side with this glorious one,

> arose the power divine,
> Who, with her dark and potent glance,
> Tames the mailed warrior's look of fire,
> Wrings from the hunter's hand his lance,
> And all unstrings the minstrel's lyre—
> The deity of wine.

Right glad were the Assoors when they beheld her bright eyes sparkling on the flood, and at the shout they raised the very mountain Mardor quailed. And then, the while her vine-flower coronal breathed deep perfume upon the air, she laughed and held aloft a glorious and resplendent cup, brought from the Ocean's utmost depths:

> 'Twas the draught of Immortality!
> Praise we the gods of India then,
> Who with such toil and strife
> Wrung from the sea, and gave to men
> Those solaces of life.

And the poem closes amid a pæan of praise to the Hindu gods. It is a poem which does not deserve to be forgotten, if only for the enthusiasm of the writer and the romantic interest of the story he tells.

Other examples of this class of poetry are the *Nemesis* of J. B. Norton, who should

have chosen the dramatic form for his tale, and *Michael de Mas, the Gold-Finder*, by Mr Keene. The tragic story of the gold-finder, who " died of want upon a bed of gold," is well set out. Both these works are comparatively modern. But for the master-piece in this style of poetry we must go back to pre-Mutiny times. Henri L. V. Derozio, the Eurasian poet, in his *Fakir of Jungheera*, displayed a delicacy of feeling and imagination, and a mastery of the music of verse which places him in the fore-front of the lesser poets of British India. The story is a tragedy. Nuleeni has been left a widow, and according to Hindu custom prepares to undergo the terrible rite of suttee, the burning of herself upon her late husband's funeral pile. Within her breast takes place a chaotic struggle between her supposed duty and her inclination. Duty conquers, and seated upon the pile she sings a hymn to the sun while awaiting death. The hymn is exquisite and abounds in musical stanzas like the following:

> My native land hath heavenliest bowers,
> Where houris ruby-cheeked might dwell,
> And they are gemmed with buds and flowers
> Sweeter than lips or lute may tell.

And then, when the bright death all but quivers at her throat, a robber-chief, whom she loves comes down from his mountain fastnesses and carries her off to be his bride; and in his retreat the robber-love and young Nuleeni

> Share
> Each bliss as perfect as the heart may bear....
> Ecstatic fancies which but once may be,
> Making us quite forget mortality.

But such happiness could not last. Nuleeni's angry father gathers a band of men to recover his stolen daughter, and attacks the robber-chief. In a martial description of the fight we learn that the robber-band won the day, but their leader fell, and next morning the frighted peasants saw

> a form
> So bold, in life it might have ruled a storm;
> And fondly ivying round it were the arms
> Of a fair woman.

It was the twice-widowed Nuleeni, and as she clasped him round, her

> lips seemed
> Still parted by sweet breath, as if she dreamed

Of him in her embrace: but they who thought
That life was tenanting her breast, and sought
Some answer from her heart to hush the doubt,
Found that its eloquence had all burned out.

Nuleeni was no longer a widow!

Here is real yet manly pathos, imaginative thought and musical and appropriate diction. And the same traits are to be found in Derozio's lesser poems, in which he shows that in the descriptive, the pathetic and the patriotic style he is equally at home. But it is as a patriotic poet that Derozio deserves most attention. He has some claim to be called the national bard of modern India, if India can in any sense of the word be considered as a nation; and, seeing that in his veins ran the blood of both East and West, the position is not inappropriate. Indeed, he actually makes the claim himself, though with some not unnatural diffidence:

Many a hand more worthy far than mine
Once thy harmonious chords to sweetness gave:
Those hands are cold, but if those notes divine
May be by mortal wakened once again,
Harp of my country, let me strike the strain.

The same tender note of sorrow for his

country's subordinate position occurs in the preface to the *Fakir of Jungheera:*

> My country, in thy day of glory past
> A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,
> And worshipped as a deity thou wast,—
> Where is that glory, where that reverence now?
> The eagle pinion is chained down at last,
> And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou:
> The minstrel hath no wreath to wreathe for thee
> Save the sad story of thy misery.
> Well, let me dive into the depths of time,
> And bring from out the ages that have rolled
> A few small fragments of those wrecks sublime
> Which human eye may never more behold;
> And let the guerdon of my labour be
> My fallen country, one kind word for thee.

In this there is that combination between feeling and form which constitutes all real poetry. And very few of Derozio's poems sink below the standard here set. The *Fakir of Jungheera* itself, his longest and most ambitious poem, is instinct with the feeling and imagination displayed in this short dedication. Almost all Derozio's work was done when he was but a stripling, not yet twenty years of age. Men speculated as to what this yet immature genius might bring forth. But India, ever ruthless India,

could not suffer so true and talented a son of hers to live, and but four more short years passed ere cholera claimed him. What English literature lost through the early death of Keats, Anglo-Indian literature lost, in lesser degree, when Derozio died; for in both men there was a passionate temperament combined with unbounded sympathy with nature. Both died while their powers were not yet fully developed. It is, indeed, probable that Anglo-Indian poetry owes much of its comparative poverty to the unsparing way in which India has cut short the careers of her most promising literary men. Not even the most flourishing literature, much less so struggling a one as the subject of this essay, could with impunity afford to see a Leyden, a Heber, or a Derozio cut off in their prime.

The rich and varied natural phenomena of India have, as might have been expected, inspired a host of descriptive poets. No Anglo-Indian poet has ever surpassed Sir Edwin Arnold in his power of depicting at length the resplendent scenery of the East. After him the most famous are perhaps Sir William Jones, Miss Mary Leslie and Mr H.G.

Keene. We have already noticed the descriptive poetry of Sir William Jones; but if he be excepted, it may be said that the earliest Anglo-Indian descriptive poet was Bishop Heber. In addition to his *Journal*, the only literary productions of his Indian life were two poems. One of these, the lines to his wife, has already been discussed. The other, the *Evening Walk in Bengal*, showed such an exquisite power of word-painting that we can only regret that Heber wrote so little in India. It was with the true poet's eye that he saw the jungle, which skirted the Ganges, with its trees and shrubs and flowers and all that warbled in or lurked beneath them. The "peepul's haunted shade," the "bamboo's arched bough," the "dusk anana's prickly blade," the "fire-fly lighting his lamp of love,"

> Retreating, chasing, sinking, soaring,
> The darkness of the copse exploring,

the "gorgeous peacock's pendent train and rushing wings" are all depicted in words of beauty. Heber, like Leyden, was cut off in his prime, and one can only conjecture what Anglo-Indian letters lost by his

death. In his sympathy with nature, he resembles Derozio. He wrote, however, so little in India, that it is useless to attempt to compare him with other Anglo-Indian poets. He was extremely susceptible to the beauty of Indian jungle scenery, and possessed the power of expressing the emotions which they aroused in him. The *Evening Walk in Bengal* is an earnest of what might have been had he lived.

Miss Mary E. Leslie is best classed among the descriptive poets, though some of her work gives her a just claim to inclusion in other classes. Perhaps the truest of the lesser poets of her type, she revelled in the beauty of nature, and in its depiction could summon up a wealth of language and imagery. *Ina and other Poems*, her first book, appeared in 1856, and was followed at intervals by *Sorrows, Aspirations and Legends from India*, and a collection of sacred lyrics and sonnets, entitled *Heart Echoes from the East*. *Ina*, the chief poem of her first book, is a long dramatic narrative, the plot of which is somewhat unskilfully planned and elaborated. The plot, however, is with the authoress a secondary

matter, her chief concern being to sing of flowers, sunbeams, music, running brooks and similar natural phenomena. Sometimes she stops to moralize, but even when she is not describing nature, she draws her figures from it, as in the lines where we are told that

> Life is a white and silver basket, void
> Of fruits and flowers; man's earthly work it is
> To gather all the sweetest flowers of time,
> And all its richest, ripest, summer fruits,
> And fill the basket ere his days are o'er.
> Thus shall it stand before his sovereign's face,
> Lightened with splendour from the azure skies,
> Struck over by eternity's great light.

These are evidently the lines of a descriptive poet who also possessed emotional power. This latter trait found greater prominence in her second volume, the *Sorrows, Aspirations and Legends from India.* The legends are stories from the history of India, prior to the British conquest, narrated in the form of lyrics. The rest of the book refers exclusively to the recent Mutiny and shows not only how truly the authoress had at heart the welfare of the Indian races, but also how a lover of India viewed the

great rebellion. When Miss Leslie apostrophizes the year 1857, we get a glimpse into the sorrow of one who still loved India in spite of all that took place in that awful year:

> Depart! depart! We ever bid farewell
> To our old years with a quick, sudden pain
> Around our hearts, as if we would again
> Recall the past by working of a spell.
> But *thou* art different.

Finally, in the *Heart Echoes from the East*, we find Miss Leslie utilizing to the full the opportunities for both descriptive and emotional writing which a tour in the Holy Land afforded. She described her visits to the various sacred spots, and the emotions which they raised. In these she remains a descriptive writer throughout, and her lyrics, though intended to stir the deepest religious feelings, seem somewhat cold. Miss Leslie, however, though she failed in some directions, occupies an honourable place among the lesser Anglo-Indian poets. In her mastery of language and her love of nature she was inferior to few. With Mr H. G. Keene, she shares pride of place as pre-eminent among that

host of poets which linked up the days of Derozio, Calder Campbell and Parker with those of Kipling, Arnold and Lyall.

Mr H. G. Keene's verse is essentially typical of that dilettantism which is characteristic of Anglo-Indian poetry. His literary life has been long, his first volume, *Ex Eremo*, appearing in 1855, his last, *Hic et Ubique*, in 1900. Between these two dates he produced *Poems Original and Translated*, *The Death of Akbar, and other Poems*, *Peepul Leaves* and *Under the Rose*. Though some of his poems occur in more than one of the above works, his published poems would yet, if bound up in one volume, fill quite a large book. But in all this bulk there is scarcely a poem that covers more than a few pages at the most. Mr Keene wrote poetry about every conceivable subject connected with India, and about many that were not connected with India, and in the melody of his verse and the tastefulness of his diction and sentiment he has few superiors; but though his poems enjoyed a considerable temporary fame, there is nothing in them to rescue them from that oblivion which must engulf all but those who can

give mankind a new vision of itself and of nature. Mr Keene's verse lacks the universal note. But perhaps the criticism is hardly fair. His aim was confessedly modest, and poetry was his recreation, not his life-work. He wrote, reckless of the judgment of man, and from this heedlessness a certain lack of human sympathy crept into his verse. The only canons of criticism which he regarded were canons which man could not apply:

> God! when I seek my feeble voice to raise,
> I think of Thee and sigh that I could bring
> My songs as sacrifices to my King,
> Not heeding mortal judgment—blame or praise.

His narrative powers, as we have seen before, found full scope in one of the longest poems that he wrote, *Michael de Mas*, the goldfinder, as well as in the *Tomb of the Suttee;* while he shows some dramatic power in *The Death of Akbar*, a one-act tragedy. At very rare intervals he touches upon the deeper issues of life, and the universal problems of mankind, as in *Credo*. His verse is essentially refined; indeed "Odi profanum vulgus et arceo" might well be prefixed as a motto to his poems, in contradistinction to

those of a greater Anglo-Indian poet than he. Only once does his refinement desert him, in the indignant outburst called *Anti-Locksley*, which some glaring example of religious hypocrisy caused him to emit. The production only shows that satire was the last thing he should have attempted. But that wonderful description of the Taj Mahal, which occurs in *Peepul Leaves*, shows that gorgeous yet tasteful word-painting was the task in which he was most at home, and is the most typical example of Mr Keene's art which could be given:

White like a spectre seen when night is old,
Yet stained with hues of many a tear and smart,
Cornelian, bloodstone, matched in callous art:
  Aflame like passion, like dominion cold,
Bed of imperial consorts whom none part
For ever (domed with glory, heart to heart),
  Still whispering to the ages, " Love is bold
  And seeks the height, though rooted in the mould;
    Touched when the dawn floats in an opal mist
  By fainter blush than opening roses own;
    Calm in the evening's lucent amethyst,
Pearl-crowned when midnight airs aside have blown
  The clouds that rising moonlight vainly kissed,
An aspiration fixed, a sigh made stone."

Miss Leslie and Mr Keene are undoubt-

edly pre-eminent among the lesser poets of this type. But there were many others who deserve mention. George Powell Thomas, in 1847, produced a volume of *Poems*, mainly of a narrative kind. Chief among them was *The Bridal Party*, a tragic Indian tale, in Spenserian metre, of a happy marriage wrecked by the "roomal" of the murderous Thug. William Waterfield's *Indian Ballads and other Poems*, published in 1868, showed signs of considerable power. One of the best of the ballads is that entitled *Moral of History*, while the *Song of Kalindi* is very musical and imaginative:

Low from the brink the waters shrink
The deer all snuff for rain;
The panting cattle search for drink
Cracked glebe and dusty plain;
The whirlwind like a furnace-blast
Sweeps clouds of darkening sand:
The forest flames; the beasts aghast
Plunge headlong from the land.
Come, Krishna, come, beloved one,
Descend and comfort me!
The lotus loves the summer sun
And I love thee!

The volume showed that the writer entered fully into the poetry of Indian life, char-

acter and scenery, and could describe it in simple and melodious verse. H. B. W. Garrick, in 1889, wrote *India*, a descriptive poem embodying a vast amount of historical and archæological knowledge that would have been better given to the world in another form. A dozen other names might be mentioned of descriptive poets, all of whom enjoyed some small reputation in their day; but sufficient has been said to indicate the influence which the scenery of the East has exercised over the literary men of British India.

From the time of the first settlement of the British in India down to the Mutiny there has been a continuous struggle between conquerors and conquered. During the space of some thirty years in the middle of the last century there was an almost unbroken stream of verse celebrating the various exploits and successes of the British arms. A great deal of this was the merest nonsense, and many other poems, inspired chiefly by the Afghan Wars, were little better. The Mutiny, of course, was the cause of the greater part of this kind of work. Charles Arthur Kelly is the only one

of these war-poets who deserves even passing mention. The sudden agony of that cataclysm which so nearly undid the work of two hundred and fifty years was well expressed by him in *Delhi and other Poems*. In *Delhi*, he roams over a vast medley of subjects, historical and mythological, but he is most at home when he is treating of the actual scenes. There is real pathos in the tribute paid to Nicholson, the besiegers' lost leader:

'Twere long to tell how many a weary day
By Delhi's bloodstained walls the avenger lay;
How some that sought to rescue found a grave,
How boomed the cannon and how fought the brave,
How hearts too great to murmur throbbed with grief,
What time death's angel bore away their chief.

One of the shorter poems of the book, *Night in the Meadows*, is rhythmical and suggestive, though it is deserving of mention chiefly because it contains a solar vagary worthy of a place beside Scott's sun which set in the East; for the poet tells how

High in the soft calm air of the twilight,
Out of their element into the sunshine,
Sporting on sunbeams leapt the glad fishes.

C. H. Kelly is undoubtedly the best of

those poets whose pens drew their inspiration from the Mutiny. The most remarkable reference to that struggle, however, is a graphic and powerful prophecy of it to be found in an anonymous poem, entitled *India*, which appeared some twenty years before the event it prophesied:

> Oh! horrors! horrors! Wherefore will ye rise
> In dark distinctness on my shrinking eyes?
> The time when wide-leagued massacre shall creep
> In smiling hatred on the British sleep!

The young Bengal civilian who wrote this had the gifts both of prophecy and of tongues.

Of reflective poets who have profoundly probed the deepest problems of humanity, British India has produced few or none, unless Sir Edwin Arnold be included in that category. But there were not a few who, in a more or less superficial way, touched upon those problems in verse which was either reflective or made an appeal to the deeper emotions. No man can live in India without receiving an impulse, driving him, if not to metaphysical speculation, at least to some surface thought

upon humanity and the mystery and tragedy of life. In Mrs Carshore's volume of *Songs of the East*, there occur a few short poems, like *Fancy and Reason*, which contain some thoughts upon life. Best of all perhaps, with the exception of Sir Alfred Lyall's work, is the *Dream of a Star*, by a certain R. F. F., which, though a little hysterical at times, contains many suggestive thoughts. Some of his musings upon sorrow are by no means destitute of real poetic feeling, as, for instance, where he says that

> Sorrow is the night of man;
> In grief alone to him is given
> With intellectual eye to scan
> The glorious mysteries of heaven.
> Joy's rich sunshine gives to view
> One wide arch of heavenly blue,
> But as when night with darkling hand
> Draws his grey curtain o'er the land
> Each of heaven's shining host
> Appears at his appointed post;
> So when sorrow's night comes o'er us
> Starry visions rise before us,
> A mighty firmament of thought
> Opens upon us all unsought.

There is something in these musings upon sorrow which seems to indicate that they

were born of sorrow. Whether that be so or not, they are as true as they are picturesque.

But to all the poets of this class, as, indeed, to all Anglo-Indian poets other than Kipling and Arnold, Sir Alfred Lyall is vastly superior. He thinks deeply on various Indian and other problems, and, fortunately for Anglo-Indian literature, has embodied his knowledge and the product of his thought in poems as well as in departmental reports. He possesses great insight into the character and workings of the mind both of the Anglo-Indian and of the native. William Watson truly says of him: "Among our subject millions in the East, Sir Alfred Lyall has not made a point of cultivating in his own person that majestic vice of mental insulation which has earned for Englishmen the characteristic they enjoy of being unsympathetic and spiritually non-conducting in their relations with foreign and especially with dependent races. Whilst remaining a thorough Englishman, he has, nevertheless, felt intensely the fascination, curiously shot through with repulsion, which the mysterious Eastern nature exer-

cises over all impressionable Western minds."*

Sir Alfred Lyall's masterpiece is the well-known *Siva*, with its sub-title, *Mors Janua Vitæ*. It is a splendid song to the god whose greatest pleasure is the sacrifice of human hecatombs. The opening verse strikes a lofty key:

> I am the God of the sensuous fire
> That moulds all nature in forms divine;
> The symbols of death and of man's desire,
> The springs of change in the world are mine;
> The organs of birth and the circlet of bones,
> And the light loves carved on the temple stones.

And soon appears the significance of the legend, *Mors Janua Vitæ:*

> I reck not of worship or song or feast;
> But that millions perish, each hour that flies,
> Is the mystic sign of my sacrifice.

For, cries the god exultingly:

> My image is Death at the gates of life.

In his emblems, continues *Siva*, is to be found the sum of human thought and knowledge. Are men seeking to trace the

*Quoted in G. F. Monkshood's *Rudyard Kipling.*

plan and purpose of God? Let them read their doom in his parable:

> For the circle of life in its flower and fall
> Is the writing that runs on my temple wall.

What matter though men have probed the secrets of the god, though they hold the keys of his inmost mysteries? Still he rules as before:

> Let my temples fall, they are dark with age,
> Let my idols break, they have stood their day;
> On their deep-hewn stones the primeval sage
> Has figured the spells that endure alway;
> My presence may vanish from river and grove,
> But I rule for ever in Death and Love.

And with this triumphant reassertion of the continued power of Siva, the poem ends.

The *Meditations of a Hindu Prince* is equally powerful. It is the old, old tale of man seeking blindly if haply he may find God:

> All the world over I wonder, in lands that I never have trod,
> Are the people eternally seeking for the signs and the steps of a God?

Then, gazing upon " this mystical India,"

where " deities hover and swarm," and " a million shrines stand open and ever the censer swings," he listens to the unending cry

Of those who are heavy-laden, and of cowards loth to die.

Anxiously he looks round for some break in the clouds of gloom. He looks to the trees; they " wave a shadowy answer "; to the rock, it " frowns hollow and grim "; to the sunlight falling on the distant mountain crest, but there is no help. He compares mankind to deer, driven helplessly into a pass in the hills by the hunter:

Above is the sky, and around us the sound of the shot that kills.

Then he calls to mind " the word of the English, who come from the uttermost sea." But no comfort can he find here. And finally, he closes in a torrent of questions, to which he can find no answer in heaven or earth or sea:

Is life then a dream and delusion, and when shall the dreamer wake?
Is the world seen like shadows on water, and what if the mirror break?

And again:

Is there nought in the heaven above whence the hail
and the levin are hurled,
But the wind that is swept around us by the rush of the
rolling world?
The wind that shall scatter my ashes, and bear me to
silence and sleep
With the dirge, and the sound of lamenting, and the
voices of women who weep.

Remarkable though this poem is for the hopelessness of its yearning and the agony of its despair, there is one other poem of The *Verses written in India* that is more remarkable still. *Theology in Extremis* is a soliloquy supposed to be uttered in 1857 by an English Agnostic, bidden to accept Islam or die. It is a really powerful analysis of the emotions of an unwilling martyr who died ostensibly because he would not give up his faith, but really because his English pride forbade him to speak a word at the bidding of a traitor rebel; and

Never a story and never a stone
Tells of the martyrs who die like me
Just for the pride of the old countree.

Face to face with death he soliloquizes:

> Oft in the pleasant summer years
> Reading the tales of days bygone,
> I have mused on the story of human tears,
> All that man unto man has done,
> Massacre, torture, and black despair,
> Reading it all in my easy chair.

He remembers that as he read of them, they were hardly real to him, almost incredible, at least, not visualized. But now he is in the clutch of a savage foe:

> Naked and bound in the sun's strong glare,
> Far from my civilized easy chair,

and it is only too real to him.

> Only a formula, easy to patter,
> And, God Almighty, what can it matter?

So he muses, aloud. " Matter enough," says a comrade who is praying aloud at his side, sure of heaven as the reward of death. And then again comes the note of despair which we have heard before. How cheerfully could he die, if he only knew whether it

mattered in the least whether he muttered the phrase or not. Death were easy

> If I were only sure God cared;
> If I had faith, and were only certain
> That light is behind that terrible curtain.

But, unerringly comes the chilling doubt:

> What if He listeth nothing at all?

And so the terrible mental conflict goes on, and in the end it is neither faith nor fear that wins the day, but national pride forbidding him to truckle with rebels.

Almost all the rest of the poems bear out the remarks of William Watson, quoted above. *A Rajput Chief of the Old School*, *The Amir's Message*, *The Old Pindaree*, *A Sermon in Lower Bengal*, *The Amir's Soliloquy*, and other poems, show an insight into Oriental motives to which few English writers have attained. In addition, *Amor in Extremis* is strongly reminiscent of Kipling's rather tragic ballad, *Soldier, Soldier, come from the Wars. Pilate's Wife's Dream* and *Joab Speaketh*, display their author's great skill in mental analysis; while *Ex Occidente Vox* and *The Land of Regrets*, which has been mentioned earlier, put in

more melodious form the dirge to which we have so often listened.

Sir Alfred Lyall's poetry is marked by two characteristics. The one is a contemplative melancholy, which, while being a general feature of Anglo-Indian literature, is most strongly displayed in Lyall's verse. It is due in part to the nature of the problems he discusses, in part to the attitude in which he approached them. It is difficult for one who deals with such questions while suffering from what Matthew Arnold calls "the malady of the century," to keep out the note of gloom. The other characteristic of Lyall's poetry is the exquisite melody of the verse. There is about it a swinging refrain which affects the reader in the same way as a ballad of Kipling or some of Swinburne's odes. The music of the verse is often, however, marred by false or imperfect rhymes; while the reader's taste is occasionally annoyed by the insertion of a commonplace phrase or expression. Despite these defects, the fact remains that Sir Alfred Lyall's poetry, by its felicitous combination of thought and form, has placed him in the front rank of British Indian

poets; since by giving voice to the inner conscience and thought of native India, he has accomplished a task which all poetry must set before it as one of its ideals, that of interpreting life. From the present point of view it is to be regretted that Sir Alfred Lyall has given one volume only to the poetry of British India, and that he has been content to pour the products of his literary genius into other channels.

The scope of this essay includes drama, perhaps a little unfortunately; for the history of English drama in India forms rather profitless reading. Comedy, save of the broadly farcical type, such as W. T. Piercy's *Our Indian Uncle*, or of the flimsiest treatment, is non-existent. In dramatic work greater success has been gained. Alexander Dow's example of dramatizing Oriental life was followed by Lieut-Col. C. J. C. Davidson in his *Tara the Suttee*, which draws its theme and its *dénouement* from one of the most tragic features of Hindoo life. A little pedantic in the fullness of its knowledge of native life, and didactic in the copiousness of its information, the story yet possesses a fair amount of dramatic inte-

rest, and is set forth in poetic language. Ramchunder, a Brahman gentleman turned roué and Thug, is roused to a spark of his former pride by the misfortunes of Tara, and contracts to marry her, to save her from a polygamist Kooleen to whom she was betrothed in infancy. He, however, is killed through her innocent agency, and she falls into the power of Thugs. To save herself from outrage she leaps on the burning funeral pile and dies. In *Tara the Suttee*, Lieut-Col. Davidson showed that the drama of native life possesses great possibilities for English writers, and Mrs E. R. McGrath tried to follow him in *The Maid of Cashmere*, a tale of the matrimonial sorrows of a certain "Noor Ufshan." In addition to these there were one or two other plays not deserving special mention.

Such were the meagre achievements in the field of the drama of native life. Besides these there was a considerable number of plays dealing with Anglo-Indian or non-Indian life and manner. The intrigue, struggle and revenge, which formed so prominent a part of medieval Italian life, was well expressed by G. P. Thomas, in his

Michele Orombello, or the Fatal Secret, and *The Assassin, or the Rival Lovers*. They are essentially tragical, and very few of the important characters are living at the end of the fifth act. Powerful in plot, and exhibiting considerable skill in the analysis of emotion, they are quite in the forefront of Anglo-Indian dramatic literature, though the slightness of the underplot in the first play and the deficiency of female characters in the second mar their effectiveness to some extent. Aiming even more at subtle dissection of emotions was J. A. Parker's *Earnest England*, or *A Soul Laid Bare*, which was, as a reviewer said on its appearance in 1897, "a medley of Agnostic science, philosophical speculation and Hindoo mythology, viewed from the point of view of Swedenborgism,"* though, as he went on to say, there was method in the madness. It was a drama of modern life, and the object of the play, which possesses great psychological insight, was to delineate the effect of a diversified experience on the development of human character. But the play that obtained greatest popularity was

**Calcutta Review*, 1897.

Rediviva, which was produced by L. C. Innes in 1874. It is an allegorical fantasia, and is replete with poetry and imaginative power of the highest order. The heroine, "Rediviva," represents a revived nationality, and is wooed and won by "the Harper," the allegorical impersonator of the ancient national aspirations. But just before the consummation of the alliance, troubles arise and cause their separation. The Courtiers of the Queen, Misrule, Intolerance and Intrigue, do their best to continue the estrangement, but are opposed by the Lady Order and the Lady Reason, Custom and Law. Finally, their nuptials are celebrated and the play closes to the music of a pæan of praise to Britain, tempered by the thought that perhaps she is relaxing that strenuousness which she exhibited of yore, a thought which the poet at last flings from him, as he reiterates his belief that:

> She but rests awhile in the breathless race
> Of onborne liberty;
> So resting she with careless might
> Recks not of outward foes;
> By her people's love well grounded
> Bides she in calm repose.

CHAPTER IV

Sir Edwin Arnold

O God, in every temple I see people that see Thee, and in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee.

Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox.

But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller.—Inscription by ABUL FAZL for a Temple in Kashmir.*

THERE exists to-day, in Asia, a faith which numbers more votaries than any other faith on earth. "A generation ago," says Sir Edwin Arnold, in his preface to his masterpiece, "little or nothing was known in Europe of this great faith of Asia, which had, nevertheless, existed during twenty-four centuries, and at this day surpasses, in the number of its followers and the area of its prevalence, any other form of creed. Four hundred and seventy millions of our race live and die in the tenets of

*Part of quotation at the head of Tennyson's *Akbar's Dream*.

Gautama; and the spiritual dominions of this ancient teacher extend, at the present time, from Nepaul and Ceylon, over the whole Eastern Peninsula, to China, Japan, Thibet, Central Asia, Siberia, and even Swedish Lapland. India itself might fairly be included in this magnificent Empire of Belief, for, though the profession of Buddhism has for the most part passed away from the land of its birth, the mark of Gautama's sublime teaching is stamped ineffaceably upon modern Brahminism, and the most characteristic habits and convictions of the Hindus are clearly due to the benign influence of Buddha's precepts. More than a third of mankind, therefore, owe their moral and religious ideas to this illustrious prince, whose personality, though imperfectly revealed in the existing sources of information, cannot but appear the highest, gentlest, holiest, and most beneficent, with one exception, in the history of thought." After saying that there is no single act or word recorded of this Indian teacher which mars the perfect purity and tenderness of his life, Sir Edwin Arnold shows that he united the truest princely

qualities with the intellect of a sage and the passionate devotion of a martyr; and concludes: "To Gautama has consequently been granted this stupendous conquest of humanity; and, though he discountenanced ritual, and declared himself, even when on the threshold of Nirvana, to be only what all other men might become, the love and gratitude of Asia, disobeying his mandate, have given him fervent worship. Forests of flowers are daily laid upon his stainless shrines, and countless millions of lips daily repeat the formula: 'I take refuge in Buddha.'"

During the last fifty years many an eye and mind have been directed upon the religion of Buddha. The researches of Max Müller and others have interpreted to the West this Eastern faith. What these have done for the metaphysician and the student of comparative religion, Sir Edwin Arnold has done for the lover of poetry. Religion must always be poetic, and nowhere more so than in the East, and few have realized this more vividly than Sir Edwin Arnold. In *The Light of Asia*, he set forth the life

and teaching of him who made the great renunciation in order to become

> the Saviour of the World,
> Lord Buddha,—Prince Siddartha styled on earth,—
> In earth and Heavens and Hells incomparable,
> All-honoured, Wisest, Best, most pitiful,
> The teacher of Nirvana and the Law.

Equipped with the profoundest Oriental knowledge, and buoyed up by an unlimited enthusiasm for his hero, the poet succeeded in entering fully into the spirit of the story. But when, with boundless sympathy, the highest descriptive powers were conjoined, as well as a nicety of taste in the selection of all that was poetic in the life of Gautama, and the rejection or partial omission of all that was aridly philosophical or unessential, the result could hardly fail to be a triumph of poetic art. The human interest of the story fixes the attention from beginning to end; while the nobility of the life and teaching of Gautama, culminating in the lofty creed which he gives and the calm victorious Nirvana, in which "the Universe grows I," and the trammels of the flesh are broken, which he foreshadows for those

who conquer sin, makes the poem read like a new Gospel. The conception of Nirvana, philosophical idea though it is, takes a new beauty in Sir Edwin Arnold's hands. That extinction of desire to which one-third of humankind aspire as the goal of many lives is to be won only over the bodies of dead sins. But when at last, these sins being slain, a man comes " Nirvana's verge unto," what unutterable restfulness awaits him!

> Him the Gods envy from their lower seats,
> Him the Three Worlds in ruin shall not shake;
> All life is lived for him, all deaths are dead,
> Karma will no more make
>
> New houses. Seeking nothing, he gains all;
> Foregoing self, the Universe grows " I ";
> If any teach NIRVANA is to cease,
> Say unto such they lie.
>
> If any teach NIRVANA is to live,
> Say unto such they err; not knowing this,
> Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
> Nor lifeless, timeless bliss.

Such is the Nirvana, for which those who struggle on to the victorious close may hope. For the attainment of this holy

state there is a Law which must be followed:

More is the treasure of the Law than gems;
Sweeter than comb its sweetness; its delights
Delightful past compare. Thereby to live
Hear the five rules aright:

Kill not,—for pity's sake,—and lest ye slay
The meanest thing upon its upward way.

Give freely and receive, but take from none
By greed, or force, or fraud, what is his own.

Bear not false witness, slander not, nor lie;
Truth is the speech of inward purity.

Shun drugs and drinks which work the wit abuse;
Clear minds, clean bodies, need no Soma juice.

Touch not thy neighbour's wife, neither commit
Sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.

Such were the homely yet sublime maxims which the Lord Buddha gave.

So all that night he spake, teaching the Law;
And on no eyes fell sleep, for they who heard
Rejoiced with tireless joy.

Finally, the poem tells how, in fullness of time, Lord Buddha fared forth to that Nirvana, " where the silence lives," even as " the dewdrop slips into the shining sea,"

and concludes with a lofty address to the mighty Teacher.

The theme is beautiful, but the language in which it is clothed is more beautiful still. The poetry possesses an Oriental luxuriance of word-painting which enables the reader without effort to breathe the Eastern atmosphere of the story. Nothing, for instance, could possibly be finer than the wonderful description of India's mightiest mountain range:

> Northwards soared
> The stainless ramps of huge Himala's wall,
> Ranged in white ranks against the blue,—untrod,
> Infinite, wonderful,—whose uplands vast,
> And lifted universe of crest and crag,
> Shoulder and shelf, green slope and icy horn,
> Riven ravine, and splintered precipice
> Led climbing thought higher, higher, until
> It seemed to stand in heaven and speak with gods.
> Beneath the snows dark forests spread, sharp-laced
> With leaping cataracts and veiled with clouds:
> Lower grew rose-oaks and the great fir-groves
> Where echoed pheasant's call and panther's cry;
> Clatter of wild sheep on the stones, and scream
> Of circling eagles: under these the plain
> Gleamed like a praying-carpet at the foot
> Of those divinest altars.

The wealth of imagination and the bril-

liancy of colouring is always in taste, and the verse has that smooth and easy flow which is so characteristic of Sir Edwin Arnold's poetry, as to become almost a vice. As the truest and most sympathetic interpretation of Eastern religion in the numbers of the West, *The Light of Asia* holds an assured place in Anglo-Indian literature, and also, we may dare to hope, a not unhonoured rank among the masterpieces of the British poets.

Other volumes of poetry which came from Sir Edwin Arnold's pen drew their themes from the old Sanskrit books, and aimed directly at presenting the religion, proverbial philosophy and romance of ancient India. These were *Indian Poetry*, *Indian Idylls*, *The Song Celestial* and *The Secret of Death*. The Sanskrit idyll, *Gita Govinda*, appeared in the first, with others, having lost in the transformation little of the imagery and sensuousness of the original. *Indian Idylls* was a similar production, being a collection of fairy legends from the *Mahabharata*, the longest and most romantic of which is the story of *Nala and Damayanti*, a stirring tale of love and

fidelity triumphing over the spirit of evil. *The Song Celestial*, a fragment of the same epic, offers less scope for narrative power than the last, though the descriptive powers have full play. It is the story of a discourse between Arjuna, Prince of India, and the Supreme Being under the form of Krishna. In this poem Sir Edwin Arnold's one great defect, due in part to the nature of his work, becomes apparent. *The Light of Asia* and some of his other poems had only faintly suggested a certain monotony and lack of dramatic power. But in *The Song Celestial* all the poet's accustomed beauty of language could not conceal it. Blank verse was Sir Edwin Arnold's favourite metre, and he seldom deserted it for others. But to be a master of that poetic form is vouchsafed to but few. *The Light of Asia* does not exhibit that command over the metre which is found in *The Idylls of the King* or *Paradise Lost*. But the harmony of theme and form in *The Light of Asia* afford a palliation which is not available in some of the poet's lesser works. Especially is this limitation apparent in *The Secret of Death*, where not only is the verse dull, but the choice of

subject was unfortunate. The Upanishads contain much that is interesting to the philosopher, but into their arid metaphysics it was impossible to infuse any spark of poetic life. Of the less important Oriental poems, *Pearls of the Faith, or Islam's Rosary*, a collection of Oriental stories in verse, and *Lotus and Jewel*, a miscellany of poems drawn from various sources, chiefly Indian, sustained Sir Edwin Arnold's reputation for sweetness of language. His non-Oriental poems, *Griselda*, which was written before the author saw India, *The Tenth Muse*, a eulogy of the press, and *Potiphar's Wife*, need not be considered, for they are unimportant and cannot affect our judgment, which must be in the main based on his Oriental poetry. The Japanese drama, *Adzuma*, cannot claim attention in a review of Anglo-Indian literature. But one work* still calls for attention, and it is one which has given rise

*Construing the term in its strictest sense, Anglo-Indian literature can, perhaps, lay no claim to *The Light of the World*. But that poem is so intimately connected with the rest of Sir Edwin Arnold's work, that it cannot be omitted here.

to no little controversy. The story of Him who came to be the Light of Asia, though, like most of the author's work, essentially exotic, and therefore likely to pall, fascinates from the start, partly through the human interest of the tale, partly through the freshness of the subject. In the story of Him who came to be the Light of the World, Sir Edwin Arnold deals with a subject with whose every detail we are familiar, so that we have an opportunity of forming an estimate of the quality of his verse, considered apart from the novelty of the subject. *The Light of the World* is not free from a suspicion of that monotony and excessive smoothness of diction which marked *The Light of Asia*. But, though many have been found to depreciate the value of this poem, it may well take its stand not very far below *The Light of Asia*. *The Light of the World* is no mere paraphrase of the Gospel; it is a creative work. In retelling some of the familiar stories of the life and death of Jesus, the poet diffuses over all the Oriental atmosphere so essential to a proper understanding of that life, and beneath his guidance many unnoticed incidents take on a

new significance. Especially is this the case in the story of the Magi. To the telling of the story of Jesus, as to the telling of the story of Buddha, Sir Edwin Arnold brought a boundless enthusiasm for all that was beautiful and lofty in thought and precept. And of his life-work of breaking down the barrier of ignorance which has so widely separated the mysticism and religious thought of East and West, *The Light of the World* forms no mean part.

As to Sir Edwin Arnold's final place in English literature it is for time to decide. Though the excessive sweetness of his work sometimes cloys, and it is often difficult to breathe in the Oriental atmosphere of his poems, we may reasonably hope that a certain length of life will be given to his masterpiece. The novelty of the subject gained his poem a hearing, but in time the knowledge which he conveys will become commonplace, and other poets, Indian and English, will sing of Buddha's life. Future generations will ask whether in *The Light of Asia* is to be found a special insight into Gautama's love and gentleness and purity of life, and more than ordinary melody in

singing of that life, and if these things are lacking in comparison with what might have been, *The Light of Asia* will then first taste of mortality. At present we are fascinated by its beauty, but often the humble wild flower of the forest outlasts the beautiful exotic.

CHAPTER V

Humorous and Satiric Verse

Dulce est desipere in loco.—HORACE, *Odes.*

IF there is one literary form more than another which Anglo-Indian literature can claim to have made peculiarly its own, it is that of light, humorous verse, sometimes delicately funny, but more often verging on the burlesque. Men and their manners have constantly been held up to ridicule in Anglo-Indian newspapers, in short snatches of verse, appearing day by day or week by week. The best of these were generally issued subsequently in book form by their authors. In other cases the writer has given them book form directly without a preliminary probation in newssheets. There has scarcely been a single prominent feature of Anglo-Indian life that has not at one time been epitomized and ridiculed in this sort of ephemeral verse. The mistakes and misconceptions of the griffin new to his work, the boredom of

moffussil life, the humours and trials attending the fateful question of precedence, the insufferable impertinence of the travelling M.P., who knows nothing about anything and thinks he knows something about everything, especially Indian questions, these and many another have been well expressed in this kind of verse. It was not high-class literature, and the writers of it were the first to recognize this fact. As "Aliph Cheem,"* one of the most successful exponents of the art of writing such verse, says:

> "Yours truly" hopes you'll laugh
> At what is merely meant for chaff;
> And, being chaff, is not so vain
> As to attempt to pass for grain.

In another part of the preface to *Lays of Ind*, in which this occurs, he exhibits the usual course which this kind of work followed on its way to book form:

> This modest tome, kind Pub., was writ
> From time to time and bit by bit;
> Some lays appearing here and there,
> Where Editors could corners spare;
> While others, bound into a book,
> Were published in Bombay—and took.

*The pen-name of Major Walter Yeldham.

Much of that which appeared in book form might appropriately have been left in the obscurity of the newspapers in which it first came before the public, but a good deal of it deserved the more permanent preservation which it obtained. It appealed to one particular phase of the temperament which Anglo-Indian life engenders. Readers of local verse, when weary of the goalless metaphysics of Lyall and the plaintive lamentation of Leyden and many another, turned their attention with avidity to lighter verse, and were glad to be able to supplement *Punch* with productions of members of their own community. And if they were successful in achieving their main object, which was, in the words of one of their own writers:

> Haply to raise a smile
> Or an idle hour beguile

among Anglo-Indians capable of relishing a joke, they are at least as valuable to us in another way, in that they give the reader who is a stranger to India an insight into the humorous side of Anglo-Indian life. There are authors enough and to spare who

exhibit to us the gloomy side of life in India; without these humorous verse-makers, little value though their work may have when viewed from the lofty plane of literature, our picture would be imperfect and one-sided.

Indian Lyrics, by W. Trego Webb, was a characteristic production of this kind. Many of the poems are humorous skits upon the ways and weaknesses of native servants, and the routine and red-tape of the Government, while others are airy and graceful appreciations of the rich tropical life of India, or pleasant descriptions of trips to the hills and other incidents of Anglo-Indian life. They remind the reader very strongly of the clever essays of Sir Ali Baba and Phil Robinson, who will be met with later. They are essentially light and superficial, and the plumb-line of the author's wit seldom reaches the depth of sarcasm or bitter satire, as in *The Chaplain*, which is an *exposé* of the shams of Station Christianity as the writer saw it. But we like him better in his lighter moments, as in *Ourselves and Others*, or the *Old Punkah*

Wallah. The sameness of the latter's existence is well hit off when he says:

> His life was like a standing pool,
> Rock sheltered from the sky;
> No lights and shadows stirred its cool
> And calm monotony.

This poem, together with *The Nautch-Girl* and *The Parsee Hat*, well illustrate the author's powers of delineating native life and character. Like most Anglo-Indian writers, the author remembers the price we pay for India in human lives, and when he does so he becomes frankly melancholy. He sees only the cloud, the silver lining is hidden from his mental vision. And so in *The Song of Death*, *Baby's Grave* and *The Memorial Well and Gardens, Cawnpore*, he ceases to be original and does what many a predecessor had done before him, nor does he justify it, like Sir Alfred Lyall, by any especial treatment. On the whole, however, the volume is well in the forefront of Anglo-Indian poetry of this nature, Kipling and Aliph Cheem alone excepted.

An abundance of gentle ridicule and banter was provided for the reader in T. F.

Bignold's *Leviora, or the Rhymes of a Successful Competitor*. He laughs at the excessive insistence on strict routine which forces the luckless civilian to

> Explain why this was entered, that omitted,
> Why A was flogged, why B acquitted;
> Note whence this shameful error of three pai,
> And why Ram Chundra did not dot an "i."

And then in smooth flowing verse he bewails the multifarious duties of the civilian, and asks:

> Was it for this that Granta bade me seek
> To mould Ben Jonson in Iambic Greek,
> Conduct my prose like Tacitus the terse,
> And rival Ovid's elegance in verse?
> Cull roots with Donaldson, weigh words with Trench,
> Read, write, and talk Italian, German, French;
> Repair to town in pestilent July,
> When dogs were rabid, and the Thames half dry,
> Abjuring bat and racket, oar and cue,
> To spend three weeks disgorging all I knew?

As he read the verse, many a civilian must have recalled painful memories of the way in which he spent the best month of the year in the endurance of the most exquisite form of torture. Of the other poems, *The*

Rising Man and *Our Peers*, though smacking a little of Jingoism, are excellent. The most amusing part of the book is that which contains the purely topical verse, which is occasionally, even at this distance, very funny. The author died while his book was in the press, and never knew the measure of success which it gained; but, looking back some twenty years after, one can say that Bignold has a right to stand among, if a little behind, Kipling and Aliph Cheem, as representative of this peculiarly Anglo-Indian form of literature.

For the purest fun, however, and the most exuberant humour, it is to these two, Kipling and Aliph Cheem, that recourse must be had. Both the *Lays of Ind* and the *Departmental Ditties* appeared first of all in the columns of a newspaper. Both of them give us picture after picture of typical Anglo-Indian humorous situations. Both of them, too, exhibit occasionally a flash of some higher thought, as if the writer found it impossible to be continually joking in the face of the stern realities of Anglo-Indian life. In Aliph Cheem's *The Loafer* comedy suddenly becomes tragedy, while in *The*

Legend of Indra and Ahi, he tells under an allegory of the way in which

> A demon serpent, Ignorance,
> In Ind still coils its fold
> About the sacred fount of truth.

In the last of the Ditties, too, *The Last Department*, Rudyard Kipling points the reader, in a moment of seriousness, forward to that time

> When idleness of all Eternity
> Becomes our furlough,

and each one shall be

> Transferred to the Eternal Settlement
> Each in his strait, wood-scantled office pent.

In the main, however, the two books go from joke to joke, sometimes reaching the very acme of farce, and seldom allowing the smile to disappear entirely from the face.

Aliph Cheem possessed no very original wit, and was not a great creative humorist. He relied for his humour not upon a mere word, as Hood so often does, nor upon the unexpected, nor upon the descent from the sublime to the ridiculous, but upon the farcical nature of the situations into which

he brings his characters. He could seize the salient points of a situation, and his chief merit consisted in the way in which he exhausted all the possibilities of humour which it contained. The plots of his stories are exceedingly simple. For instance, in *Perfide Albion*, one of the funniest pieces in the whole book, we are told how "Mossoo" decided on the seizure of Perim:

> an island
> Devoid of a tree,
> A baked bit of dry land
> Below the Red Sea.

He had no particular use for it, but he saw it there lying unoccupied, a prey to the first comer. His view was the following:

> Ne possédent-ils pas Aden, ces Anglais, mon Dieu?
> Oui; nous aurons Perim. Pourquoi non? Sacré bleu!

The French ship sent out to seize it puts in at Aden, and the captain and officers are liberally entertained there. The captain mysteriously remarks:

> C'est défendu de dire
> Ce que nous allons faire,

but under the influence of his host's port he lets fall a few hints. An English " Aide " at once steals off, and boarding an English warship, sails off to the coveted island. How " Mossoo " sailed off next day, and on approaching the island looked at it through the telescope; how, after a pause, he put it down, as in doubt; how he looked again, and took his mouchoir and polished the lens; how he looked again, and blew his nose, rubbed his eyes, etc., etc.; how he laid the telescope down, put his hands in his pockets, and

Sacré-bleu-ed awful a minute or so,

can best be gathered from the poem itself.* Enough, however, has been sketched of the plot of the story to show its simplicity; and *Perfide Albion* may in this respect be considered a type of most of Aliph Cheem's work.

Roaming at random through the *Lays of Ind*, we find all the old familiar characters held up before our eyes to create a moment's laughter. Here we come across

*It is believed that this story has some foundation in fact.

the " moonshee " doing his best to drag his lazy pupil through his " H.S.":*

We did a little Forbes, and read *Selections* now and then,
Sometimes I scratched a little with the sticks he brought for pen.

But it was all in vain. " Very little native *bât*† was done," and the day of the examination fast approached.

The time approached. The day before my Moonshee whispered low—
" Sa'ib likely fail translation: brigade clerk poor Moonshee know;
He keeping printed papers, but he open box for me:
Sa'ib giving fifty rupee, Sa'ib perhaps he this agree."

But at the last moment all the carefully prepared arrangements broke down. There was to be a viva-voce conversation with a sepoy in the presence of the examiners. The sepoy had been tampered with by the wily Moonshee, and told what to say to the sahib, who had learnt up appropriate Urdu answers; but when the time came, not a word did the sahib understand:

Oh, too late.
The stupid idiot took me for another candidate!
I did not pass.

*Higher Standard Examination. †Conversation.

A few pages further on *O'Leary's Revenge* described the crushing of an Anglo-Indian fop; *The Police-Wallah's Little Dinner* shows the ennui which the officials of a little up-country station can feel in one another's presence after a few weeks with little change of company. Then we go into laughter, mingled with pity, over the tale which tells how

> In days gone by, when law in Ind was not so nice as now,
> And Beaks in their procedure would much latitude allow,
> I sent my Kitmutgar once with a note unto the Beak:
> "Please give the bearer half a dozen lashes for his cheek."

But the wily Kitmutgar persuaded a highly respectable fellow-servant of long standing to take the note for him, much to the latter's disadvantage. Elsewhere we find some sound and amusing advice to a "griffin"; a very funny account of the way in which a young subaltern obtained a certain invitation to a dinner at Scorcheepore, where the "social ice" is "the only thing that's never known to melt," or, rather, attended the dinner without an invitation, thereby causing Captain Sprint

to lose his bet; an account of the wonderful exploits with the sabre of Colonel Mc Murther; a magnificent contest in the art of drawing the long bow between Major Corker, of the Dashty-second Crashers, and Captain Goak, a rival of the former, and many another tale, each as funny as these. In the sheer comicality of the situations and the faculty of employing all their humorous possibilities, Aliph Cheem takes front rank among Anglo-Indian versifiers of this kind.

The Departmental Ditties are equally funny, though, unlike Aliph Cheem's *Lays of Ind*, their themes are confined solely to Anglo-Indian subjects. As they form a branch of Rudyard Kipling's work peculiar and distinct from the rest of his writings, and are so important a contribution to the kind of literature at present under discussion, it is more convenient to consider the book in this place rather than reserve it entirely until the general discussion of Rudyard Kipling's Anglo-Indian work. *Departmental Ditties* was the book by which Rudyard Kipling first won an Anglo-Indian reputation. What could be more

romantic than the story of that "little brown baby, with a pink string round its stomach," which, in 1886, moved all India to laughter? The Ditties have seen many sumptuous editions since, but it was as a lean oblong docket with stitches to imitate Government envelopes, and addressed to the Heads of Departments and all Government officials, that they first saw book form. Essentially topical and ephemeral though most of the verse in that volume was, it told the world, as Sir William Hunter said, that "a new literary star had risen in the East." It was not so much the actual contents of the volume that so impressed the Anglo-Indian public as the promise of genius contained in them for all who had eyes to see. Their actual worth none knew better than Kipling himself. *The Departmental Ditties* were simply a series of pictures of the ridiculous side of Anglo-Indian life:

> I have written the tale of our life
> For a sheltered people's mirth,
> In jesting guise,—but ye are wise,
> And ye know what the jest is worth.

There is no need for a detailed account of the Ditties, of the kind which the compara-

tive obscurity of other writers has rendered necessary. Every Anglo-Indian, and most stay-at-home Englishmen, have heard of Ahasuerus Jenkins, who " used to quit his charger in a parabolic way "; of Potiphar Gubbins, who, in spite of himself, is at " the top of the tree "; of Delilah Aberystwith and Ulysses Gunne; and of poor Jack Barrett, who died at Quetta. Few are ignorant of the reason why Sleary's babies did not develop Sleary's fits, much to Minnie Bofkin's disappointment; or why Boanerges Blitzen found his districts so curiously hot. Everyone has laughed at the picture of the Commissariat elephant, with his trunk up a drain, seeking a purchase on Bink's toes, or of " that most immoral man," tapping a private line. Of the additional poems bound up with the Ditties, all those which can, from their character, claim discussion in this chapter are equally famous, as well as most of those which cannot. *Pagett, M.P.*, the tale of him who so soon learnt that the heat of India was not an " Asian Solar Myth," is already a classic of its kind. All the comic verses of the book exhibit Rudyard Kipling's now well-known

gift of humour, some of them, like that which relates the story of General Bangs, seeming to exhaust the possibilities of farce. But the secret of their success is the fact that running through almost all the verses, even the unrestrainedly comic ones, there is a vein of hidden power, which is not obvious but only felt, and is the almost intangible evidence of genius. Even in these early productions the author shows that power of gripping the reader, of playing upon all his emotions in turn, which marked him out later as a man of more than ordinary ability. Many of them are more than mere farces destined to evoke a moment's laughter, and then to be forgotten. Not a few are true satires, powerfully holding up to ridicule some of the abuses of British India. *The Story of Uriah* affords one of the grimmest sidelights on certain aspects of Anglo-Indian social life to be found in literature. *My Rival* is equally cutting, though not equally tragic. *Pagett, M.P.*, was cruel, though justly cruel; while the story of Potiphar Gubbins, C.E., leaves the reader with the feeling that there is some unrighted abuse somewhere calling for rec-

tification. Darkly ironical, too, is *The Masque of Plenty*, which satirized the Indian Government which inquired into the economic condition of the peasant's land, and saw that it was good. As for the other poems in the book, not hitherto mentioned, many, especially *The Galley Slave*, perhaps the most ironically pathetic in the book, are almost too good to be classed as ephemeral or topical verse.

With *The Departmental Ditties* we may conveniently close our survey of this peculiarly Anglo-Indian type of verse. Like similar verse by other writers, a great deal of the verses in that volume can have no permanent value, when the topical allusions are entirely forgotten, as is now almost the case. Aliph Cheem, and in lesser degree, Webb and Bignold, succeeded simply in making their readers laugh. But behind much of the work in Rudyard Kipling's book we feel that there is some vague, indefinable element of power, which lifts his work out of the common ruck. When we read Aliph Cheem, we feel that different emotions are stirred from those which a large proportion of *The Departmental*

Ditties excites. In the one case they are simple, in the other complex. Nowhere in this class of literature do we find such simple fidelity to life; nowhere occurs so often the flash of the pregnant phrase; nowhere else do we see the same insight into human nature and motives, which is so essential to all great humorists. It is not that the actual humour of Kipling's situations is greater than those of Aliph Cheem; for in this, dealing as they did with the life around them, both started with equal opportunities. Aliph Cheem made his readers laugh; Kipling did more. Many things contribute to his superior success. His air of omniscience was peculiarly suited to this class of verse; his command of metre was greater than that of Aliph Cheem; while his attitude towards his characters, and herein lies the greatest difference between the two men, was subjective rather than objective. Aliph Cheem's characters are obedient marionettes; Kipling's are sentient self-guiding actors. In Aliph Cheem's hands, clever as they are at drawing out the possibilities of a situation, a good story remains nothing but a good story. But when

Kipling's mind has worked up the material, we instinctively, indefinably, feel that something has been added. Therein lies the difference between talent and genius.

CHAPTER VI

Humorous and Satiric Essayists

Seeing too much sadness hath congealed your blood,
And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy . . . .
. . . . frame your mind to mirth and merriment,
Which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.

The Taming of the Shrew.

IN the literature of British India, the essay, which in the literature of modern Europe has been modified in such an infinite variety of ways, has tended to appear in one of two extreme and mutually antagonistic forms. The one extreme is the severely objective; the other the extravagantly subjective. The first form, comprising the treatise, the monograph, and similar productions, exceeds the scope of this essay; the other is, of course, well within it. Various modifications on one side or the other have naturally to some extent tended to reconcile the two extremes, or, at least, to obscure the line of demarcation between them; but a real " tertium quid," midway

between the two, is rarely found. An example perhaps is to be seen in Boyd's essays on literary and moral subjects, which appeared in 1794. Of such a nature, too, are Macaulay's essays on Clive and Warren Hastings, if these can lay any claim to a place in Anglo-Indian, as distinct from English, literature. Torrens's clever articles on Indian sport and other Indian subjects, which appeared shortly before the Mutiny, afford, perhaps, a further example, though the sympathy which they displayed with coloured humanity caused them to reach no small degree of subjectivity. But the truest example of this medium type was Captain D. L. Richardson, the author of *Literary Leaves*, *Literary Chit-Chat* and *Lives of the British Poets*, and the chief critic of general literature whom Anglo-India has produced. He applied the canons of criticism with the acutest judgment, and many of his literary predictions have been fulfilled. Throughout, his writings breathe a certain degree of self-expression, which is the true aim of the Essay as distinguished from the Treatise.

In what has been called the extrava-

gantly subjective type of essay is to be found most, though not all, of the prose humour and satire which British India has produced. The atmosphere of Anglo-Indian life has been peculiarly congenial to its growth; for to the Anglo-Indian temperament, light prose literature, like light verse, has never appealed in vain. Parker, Robinson, Sir Ali Baba, Keene and Pritchard, not to mention others, constitute a galaxy of talent surpassed in Anglo-Indian literature only by the lengthy list of novelists.

The real founder of this light and humorous type of essay, which has so flourished in British India, was Henry Meredith Parker. His *Bole Ponjis*, a collection of stories, essays and verse, contained, as the title page set out, *The Tale of the Buccaneer, A Bottle of Red Ink, The Decline and Fall of Ghosts, and other ingredients*. The collection was preceded by a delightful preface, which exactly breathes the spirit of the fun which has animated most of the subsequent work of the Anglo-Indian essayists. It deserves citation:

"Fair and charming reader of the

dearer, far more worthy and more noble, half of the human race, you may have heard of—courteous reader of the more disagreeable moiety, you may have been familiar with—Punch! I do not mean the jocund potentate who now rules hilarious from his palace in Fleet Street, nor do I refer to that edifying creature who slays Judy and hangs the hangman, to the infinite delight of the people's majesty in all public thoroughfares; still less do I advert to the punch, thwack, or thump which is delivered and received on all suitable occasions with such entire equanimity and infinite gusto by the bellicose natives of this warlike Isle. No! I refer to none of these things, but to the bland, genial and harmonious composition, which in my hot youth, 'when George the Third was king,' soothed a Regent's cares of Empire." In this gently satiric strain Parker proceeds to show that Punch had its prototype in a Calcutta drink, compounded of various Indian ingredients. " Kind reader, I have endeavoured to compound for you *Bole Ponjis*. I trust that it may not be pronounced wholly unpalatable. But if the weak or the sour

should be thought to predominate, or bear an undue proportion to the nobler elements, I can only say, with poor Clara Gazul, 'Excusez les fautes de l'auteur.'"

But no apology was needed for the book, which in its exquisite humour, vivid imagination and narrative skill, stands on the very highest level. *A Bottle of Red Ink* is a weird tale of a German who, after being hanged for alleged murder, was yet saved in a remarkable way, and lived to refute the legal axiom that "Men will lie, circumstances cannot"; while *The Junction of the Oceans* is a wonderful peep into a very wonderful future. The whole of mankind, with the exception of three or four, are drowned in a watery cataclysm, and the catastrophe, the agony of the survivors, and their plans for the future, are portrayed in some powerful and imaginative writing, which is really a prose poem. *Agincourt* is a delightful piece of delicate essay-work, criticizing Drayton's ballad on the subject. One of the funniest pieces in the book is the witty half-verse, half-prose, dissertation on the *Decline and Fall of Ghosts*, in which the author comes to the conclusion that

ghosts are delusions of the waking imagination, and asserts that no one would ever believe in ghosts who had been half so much annoyed by them as he. Little behind this in real humour is *An Oriental Tale*, which is an extravaganza satirizing those who demand that all stories emanating from the East should be full of Eastern imagery and marvels. *The Chokeydar* and *Calcutta Dust*, which are humorous skits upon the functionary named and the discomforts of summer respectively, complete the list. Each one of these stories and essays is an achievement by itself. No Anglo-Indian writer before or since showed a greater delicacy of wit, or a more fluent command of apposite language. As we have seen, Parker occupies no unhonoured place among the lesser poets of Anglo-India; among its humorous essayists, he shares with Phil Robinson and Ali Baba, the foremost rank.

From the time of *Bole Ponjis* down to the present day there has been a constant output of the satiric or playful type of essay. In 1878 Phil Robinson started a vogue, with his delicately humorous pen-sketches of the birds, beasts, trees, natives and other

phenomena of Indian life and scenery. He took for his subject objects which every Anglo-Indian had seen times without number, and allowed his mind to play in a light and airy fashion upon the fertile matter thus presented to his hand. "Our author," said Sir Edwin Arnold, in a preface to *In My Indian Garden*, "is one of the happy few in whom familiarity with Indian sights and objects has not bred indifference, but rather suggested the beginnings of a new field of Anglo-Indian literature. If I am not wrong, the charm of looking at these utterly commonplace animals and people of India in this gay and pleased spirit is that we get that freshness of feeling, which youth alone enjoys, when all the world is new to it, interpreted by the adult and matured mind, suddenly entering a new world; for such India is to the English official on his first arrival. All we other Indians had, of course, noticed all those odd and tender points about the syce's children, the pea-boy, the bheesty's mother, the Dâk-bungalow moorghees, the mynas, crows, green parrots, squirrels, and the beetles that get into the mustard and the

soup. Here, however, is one at last who writes down his observation." It was, as Sir Edwin Arnold says, the gay and pleased spirit with which Phil Robinson looked at commonplace things that especially distinguished him, but the remark will apply, though with less force, to almost all the Anglo-Indian lighter essayists, exactly as the reverse applies in the case of the bulk of the poets.

Some years before, Robinson had started the *Chameleon*, a light literature periodical, and had written *On leave in my Compound*, whose contents are sufficiently indicated by the motto attached to it: "Dulce est desipere in loco." *Under the Punkah* was a work of a very similar character to that of *In my Indian Garden*, and fully maintained the author's reputation for delicate writing, pleasant humour and aptness of quotation. He was the author, too, of many essays on non-Indian subjects as well as a few stories. All his work was exquisitely tasteful and unfailingly humorous. But the humour is never glaringly obvious. It has to be searched for, but when found, well repays the trouble. Phil Robinson's essays met with instant success and were followed by

the sincerest form of flattery. Of the numerous authors who imitated him the most successful was E. H. Aitken, who, in his amusing *Behind the Bungalow* and *Tribes on my Frontier*, showed that he had caught much of the spirit of his predecessor. But even at his best, "Eha" remains a pale reflection of Phil Robinson. To the latter belongs the credit of having opened up a new field for literary men in India, which is yet capable of bearing much fruit. It has already borne much, for, not to speak of the conventional developments of the innovation such as those of "Eha," the work of Phil Robinson has done Anglo-Indian literature an immense service by pressing home the truth of that principle of art which G. H. Lewes so often insisted upon; the value of the common incident or simple phenomenon which has been part of the writer's experience, in contradistinction to that of the imposing theme which has not. Insight is the first condition of art, but insight into that of which one knows nothing by experience is difficult, if not impossible.

From the delicately humorous we pass to the frankly satiric, and here Sir Ali Baba

stands supreme. G. Aberigh-Mackay, who wrote under this pseudonym, wrote one book only, *Twenty-One Days in India*, but it was sufficient to give him a permanent place among Anglo-Indian humorists. The book is a collection of ludicrously funny satires upon Departmental people from the Viceroy downwards. He and other lofty officials yield up to the reader a vast store of humour, which we are surprised to find latent in such apparently sedate individuals. All the well-known types contribute their quota to the fun. Of one worthy official we learn that " he proved himself to have the true paralytic ink flux, precisely the kind of wordy discharge or brain hæmorrhage required of a high official in India .... He desired exceedingly to be thought supercilious, and he thus became almost necessary to the Government, was canonized and caught up to Simla."

Baby in Partibus is of a rather different nature. "The Empire," we are told, "has done less for Anglo-Indian babies than for any class of the great exile community. Legislation provides them with neither rattle nor coral, privilege leave nor pension.

Papa has a Rajah and Star of India to play with; mamma the Warrant of Precedence and Hill Captains. But baby has nothing." And so the light banter proceeds, until the one definitely Anglo-Indian note creeps in, even in the midst of such rollicking fun. There is a strange light one day in baby's eyes, and weird thoughts in his brain; weird questions startle his mamma and his frightened ayah; and soon "Baby is planted out for evermore in the dark and weedy cemetery that lies on the outskirts of the station where he lived and died."

But the lugubrious note rarely checks Ali Baba's humorous vein. Perhaps the gem of the collection is the attack upon that "fearful wildfowl, the travelling M.P.," which was an effort towards the same end as that which Rudyard Kipling aimed at in *Pagett, M.P.* The fact that two authors of such high repute went out of their way to attack the members of the British Parliament who visit India shows what an infliction some of them must be to the long-suffering civilian. "The unhappy creature's mind," says Ali Baba, "is a perfect blank regarding Faujdari and Bandobast,"

and he " cannot distinguish the molluscous baboo from the osseous pathan," and yet he will " actually presume to discuss Indian subjects with you, unless strict precautions be taken." And then we accompany the unhappy M.P. through his tour. A week after his arrival he commences his great work on the history, literature, philosophy and social institutions of the Hindoo. We see him studying *Forbes's Hindustani Manual* in the railway carriage. He is undoubtedly penning the chapter on the philology of the Aryan family. Then he writes an article for *The Twentieth Century*, " Is India worth keeping?" Two broad streaks of laughter follow in his wake, one left by his ignorance, the other by his information. His erroneous, hazy, distorted first impressions, of the sort which the griffin spends his first year in shedding, are served up for those at home. The griffin has to " get rid of his poetic mists, and his illusive, fantastic, subjective, ideal, picturesque conceptions of India; in time he attains to prose, and removes the gilt from the Empire, and penetrates to the brown gingerbread of Rajahs and Baboos." Not so the M.P. " As

far as I can learn, it is a generally received opinion at home, that a man who has seen the Taj at Agra, the Qutb at Delhi, and the Duke at Madras, has graduated with honours in all questions connected with British interests in Asia; and is only unfitted for the office of Governor-General of India from knowing too much."

The satire hurt, because it was true, true not only of the M.P., but of most Englishmen. Sir Ali Baba could be pathetic and he could be irresistibly humorous; but it is as a satirist, sometimes bantering, but occasionally bitter and stern, that he is important in Anglo-Indian literature. He is not a subtle humorist like Phil Robinson; on the contrary, his wit is broad, and now and again verges upon buffoonery; but, if we except Kipling and Pritchard, no Anglo-Indian prose satirist ever delivered a blow in more telling fashion, or compressed so much real fun within so few pages.

Other achievements of Anglo-Indian literature of this general type were *Sketches in Indian Ink*, by "John Smith, jnr," which appeared in 1881, and was the work of Mr H. G. Keene, the poet; the

anonymous *Adventures of Thomas Brown;** Sir George Trevelyan's *Competition Wallah;* and *India in* 1983. In the *Sketches in Indian Ink*, we find a combination of telling satire and lofty moral purpose. In *The Oxonian in India*, which is the most striking essay in the book, we meet with one of the few attempts which Anglo-Indian literature of this kind made to solve ethical problems. The Oxonian's early death robs us of the answer. Mr Keene's prose, like his verse, shows keen insight into human nature as well as good taste in the selection of language. *The Adventures of Thomas Brown*, draws its theme from the experiences of early griffin-hood through which all Anglo-Indians have to pass. The humour is of the frank, open description which is not produced or enhanced by literary artifice. The Anglo-Indian Verdant Green provides a feast of laughter. Incidentally, we get a picture of a Military Political Agent of the old school, who laments the good old days, and tells many an amusing tale of the sum-

*I have since been informed that the anonymous writer of these *Adventures of Thomas Brown* was Mr F. C. O. Beaman.

mary justice of those times. "Fine old military justice! and what justice it was, too! The pure, undiluted article!" *The Competition Wallah* was the result of a twelve months' sojourn in India, and appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1865. It is a collection of light journalistic impressions. Various features of Indian life are touched upon, including the class of young Bengalis, whom the writer found talking Johnsonian English, and quoting Goldsmith to the effect that they regretted "the time when every rood of English ground maintained its man," in addition to apostrophizing trade's unfeeling train for "usurping the land and dispossessing the swain."

India in 1983 is a work in the nature of a political satire. It is exceedingly funny and depicts the imaginary chaotic condition of the native Parliament which will rule India when the dreams of the liberal reformers are realized. The book was written in 1883, and sought to look forward a hundred years. The disqualifications of the Indian for practical national palaver

are made to yield up an inexhaustible fund of humour.*

Such were the results, by no means insignificant, of the attempts at humour and satire under the form of the light or playful essay or sketch. Humour and satire are, of course, found expressed in other literary forms. Both in his verse and in his fiction Rudyard Kipling has shown himself one of the greatest of living humorists; and many of the novel-writers excel in both humour and satire. But perhaps the cleverest and most cutting satire upon Anglo-Indian life is to be found in a work which appeared in 1871, entitled *Chronicles of Budgepore*. This adopted the plan of stringing an immense amount of acute criticism and cruel, if just, sarcasm upon a series of thin, sketchy plots. In his preface to these Chronicles, the author, Iltudus Pritchard, says: "They are intended to illustrate some characteristics

*The author, who, I am informed, is Mr T. Hart-Davies, M.P., is now a Member of the British Committee of the National Indian Congress, and an enthusiastic champion of the political aspirations of native India. He evidently believes immutability of political opinion to be the equivalent of stagnation!

of social and official life in Upper India, both in European and native society, and to show the quaint results which an indiscriminate and often injudicious engrafting of habits and ideas of Western civilization upon Oriental stock is calculated to produce .... If, while seeking to amuse, I shall have succeeded in drawing attention, under the disguise of fiction, to serious abuses and defects too patent to all who have studied British India from an impartial point of view, I shall not have cause to regret the time spent upon these pages." The author declines to tell where Budgepore is. If it is not in the map, it is not his fault, for he is not a map-maker by profession. The first Chronicle, entitled *A Rash Promise*, is an amusing account of the way in which the promise of a civilian, about to leave for England, to take any little packages home for those staying behind, was liberally interpreted. On his arrival he resembled nothing so much as a combination of common carrier, nurse and postman, for he had been entrusted with one hundred and twenty-seven packages, weighing ninety-six pounds eleven ounces, besides

"Jimmy and Totty," whom he had, in a weak moment, promised to convey to England for their parents. Chronicle II, *The Budgepore Municipal Commission*, details the awful results of the unscientific methods of taxation adopted by the municipal governing body created at Budgepore by the liberal enthusiasm of the Government of India. The wonderful, though ruinous and absurd, Trade Exhibition at Budgepore is the subject of the third satire. It is a terrible indictment of the corruption, bribery and blackmail, alleged to be carried on by the native servants in connexion with these exhibitions unsuspected by the credulous officials. Here and there a note of tragedy is struck. The fourth Chronicle is a similar attack upon official credulity, and here again the tension of the story is often painful. *The History of the Barracks*, like its predecessor, *The Budgepore Exhibition*, is a bitter satire on the Western attitude which the officials adopt in the face of Oriental problems. The remaining Chronicles are lighter in touch and are sometimes very funny. In *A Lawsuit* the author manages to make us laugh at the absurdities from

which Law, in India as well as in England, never seems free. The contrast between the solemnity of the law and the ridiculous nature of the proceedings in the lawsuit is very entertaining. The cleverest, and at the same time most pleasant and humorous, Chronicle is, however, the ninth, entitled *The Remounts*. The reader is introduced to a very incompetent officer, named Twemlow, who, to his horror, is given a stud appointment, though, as he himself admits, he can only tell a horse from a cow by the horns. Soon after accepting the appointment, an order comes for Remounts, and the unlucky Twemlow branded all the horses in the stud with the letter " R," and forwarded them. Now Government horses, when they became unserviceable, were marked " R," but Twemlow thought that " R " meant Remount; hence his action. On the arrival of the Remounts, the Major gazed with horror at the fatal letter and had the horses put up for auction on the spot and sold for a mere song. As the horses were quite sound, the Government naturally suffered great loss, and Twemlow was indicted for fraud. A detailed account of

the trial is given. The relation of the evidence brings out all the writer's powers of telling a good story well. Among other pieces of evidence, we learn by the answer of a native stud-groom to a culpably unjustified leading question, that all the Sircar's (Government's) horses are born with the mark "R" upon them. The prisoner wisely declined to cross-examine upon this point. In the end we are glad to discover that Twemlow escapes with a reprimand.

The author of *The Chronicles of Budgepore* is certainly the most powerful prose satirist to be found among Anglo-Indian literary men. Many other satirists contrived to be as amusing as Iltudus Pritchard; none, however, has with humour combined such a power of stirring the deeper emotions which have their seat in the nobler passions of man. Sir Ali Baba is a satirist and a clever one, but he merely makes us laugh. Pritchard, on the other hand, makes us angry, pitiful, rebellious against the grip of inevitable circumstance, contemptuous of the crass folly of those held up to ridicule in his pages; in addition, though as a concomi-

tant, in spite of what he says to the contrary in his preface, rather than as a primary object in most of his work, he amuses us by stimulating our sense of the ridiculous. In his frankly satiric pieces he shows a command of the bitterest irony; in his purely comical efforts the humour is spontaneous and often irresistible. He has few or no tricks of style, except a whimsical fancy for designating his characters by absurd and impossible names; but is content to let his story tell itself straightforwardly. Like all real humorists he understood human nature and was a master of pathos, as he showed in the account of the death of Julia Congreve, in *The Budgepore Political Agency*. In short, in his command over almost the whole range of human emotions, Iltudus Pritchard resembles no one so much as his greater successor, Rudyard Kipling, with whom, as a humorist, he naturally challenges comparison. In relation to others it is a little difficult to class him, owing to the difference in their literary form and literary aims; though, even so, it may safely be asserted that in humorous power he stands before Parker, the facile story-

teller and essayist, Sir Ali Baba, the clever delineator of Indian types, and Robinson, the skilful utilizer of the commonplace, and the interpreter in India of beast and tree and man. Kipling alone, among Anglo-Indian writers, surpasses him as a humorist. Iltudus Pritchard possessed in full measure that talent akin to genius which has been so sparingly given to Anglo-Indian literary men. Humour, melancholy, anger, pity, joy and grief he could evoke from the reader with almost equal facility, while sometimes he did what Kipling seldom or never did, touched the loftier chord of spiritual ecstasy. But in the power with which the notes, which are common to both, are struck, is exhibited the difference which exists between undoubted genius and ability which hovers doubtfully between genius and talent.

We have reached the end of our survey of the humorous and satiric prose writings of Anglo-Indians. Many a name, worthy of a place, in some cases, it may well be, more worthy a place than some that have found insertion, has been necessarily omitted. By what has been said, however, the general

characteristics of this most important branch of British Indian literature have been sufficiently outlined. We have noticed in an earlier chapter the contemplative melancholy of much of the poetry of Anglo-Indians. Leyden, Heber, Richardson and Webb, with many another, struck the deep diapason of the dirge. A reaction was inevitable, for Anglo-Indians are a practical folk, and love the dark shadow of the mourner no more than other men; and so it fell to Phil Robinson, Sir Ali Baba, Parker, and, last but not least, to clever ironical Pritchard and many-sided Kipling, to chase away the cloud of melancholy which at one time bade fair permanently to obsess the literature of British India. That they succeeded in doing so is obvious to the most casual observer of to-day. In certain moods a gloominess of temperament is congenial to the human mind; but no melancholy can long resist the infection of laughter long-continued and unrestrained.

CHAPTER VII

Anglo-Indian Fiction

The modern novel converts abstract ideas into living models . . . . It is the only way in which people can learn what other men and women are like.—SIR WALTER BESANT'S *Art of Fiction.*

THE tremendous popularity and output of the novel is one of the main features of nineteenth-century literature. This statement is true of Anglo-Indian, as of all European and American, literature. Its productions in the sphere of fiction far exceed those of any other literary form. In spite, however, of its immense fecundity, the Anglo-Indian novel can claim to have made but few permanent additions to English literature. If, for instance, we are seeking for a typical Anglo-Indian official, our minds instinctively refer, not to the hero of some Anglo-Indian work of fiction, but to Joseph Sedley or Colonel Newcome,*

*Both of these, however, it should be noticed, are retired officials. For a portrait of the official in active

creations of one who, it is true, was an Anglo-Indian by birth, but never saw India as an adult. Few British-Indian writers have contributed a picture to the gallery of famous men and women of fiction. Among those characters that may fairly claim to have obtained a place, even though some of them are hung a little out of sight in the gallery, are Meadows Taylor's Mahratta Princess "Tara"; Mrs Boynton of *The Potter's Thumb;* the imperishable Mulvaney and one or two other of Kipling's heroes. It may be, too, that Mrs Croker's hectoring, impecunious Irishman, Major Malone, Curwen's delightful Zit and Xoe, the clever Desvoeux, the light-hearted Maud, the unfortunate Camilla and one or two others of Sir H. S. Cunningham's characters are destined to be forgotten a little later than others. Sir G. T. Chesney's Mutiny Heroes, and one or two of John Lang's realistic portraits, deserved a place in the gallery as pictures of certain phases and epochs of Anglo-Indian life which few have painted better. Mrs Ever-

work, recourse must be had to the Anglo-Indian novelists.

ard Cotes, too, has painted a few portraits which may well outlive her. On the whole, however, the record is not brilliant, though it is far from being despicable. The task of the Anglo-Indian novelist has been by no means easy. The partial conception of the function of the novel which is expressed in Sir Walter Besant's remark, quoted at the head of this chapter, has been the main coast-light by which the British Indian novelists have steered. On the whole it has kept them safely in the respectable, if unromantic, open sea of purpose and utility; but, at the same time, it has often led them into no small danger and embarrassment. They have, with few exceptions, neglected the other functions of the novel, which it is capable of exercising, such as that of giving living concrete expression to the intangible abstractions of contemporary thought or of contemporary Democratic theory; and have devoted themselves to the task of reflecting and portraying Indian or Anglo-Indian life. This not a few have done with more than tolerable success, but the necessity of writing with one eye fixed on the English public, and the other on the Anglo-

Indian community, has compelled them to seek to steer a middle course between the Scylla of didactic dullness and the Charybdis of unintelligibility. Those who veered toward the former assumed too little knowledge on the part of their English readers and retarded the story with voluminous explanations; the others assumed too much, and their novels were hard to understand. In consequence, Anglo-Indian novelists seldom obtained a wide hearing in England, and had to be content with an Indian reputation. But few Anglo-Indian writers guessed at the main secret of their lack of success in England. They continued to make onslaughts upon the British book-market, regardless of that of India, and forgetful of the tremendous handicap under which they started. Not until Kipling pointed out the fact by his early successes, did they realize the apparently obvious truism that an author writes, after all, primarily for his own people, who possess the sympathies and point of view, through lack or distortion of which others fail to understand him.

A concomitant cause of their ill-success

in England was their disregard of the well-known, if lamentable, fact, that in things Indian, *qua* Indian, English people are, or were, profoundly uninterested. If in an Anglo-Indian novel the English public found striking ideas, interesting incident, emotional writing, and all the other requisites which they demand in a novel, they were glad to read it, careless where the scene was laid; but as a mere picture of Anglo-Indian life, however tasteful, clever or picturesque, they held it at arm's length. And so it happened that the Anglo-Indian novelist sacrificed his primary legitimate market for a chimera which too often resulted in disappointment due to causes whose operation he should have recognized. He should have, in general, striven for the certainty of an Anglo-Indian hearing, and left the possibility of a British audience in the background, instead of reversing the importance of the position, as he generally did. But though, from the perhaps somewhat inartistic point of view of popularity, the majority of Anglo-Indian novelists cannot be said to have succeeded, yet those who attempted fiction can be

said to have achieved their principal, if modest, aim, that of giving a more or less faithful picture of native or Anglo-Indian life in a form more attractive than the hackneyed " Letters " or volume of travels which were such a marked feature of the early literature.

The success of Morier's *Hajji Baba* led many Anglo-Indians to try to do for India what Morier had done for Persia. And so it came about that the earliest attempts at fiction were rather inartistic descriptions of native life and customs appended to a shadowy skeleton of plot. The majority of them were granted a hearing in England owing to the interest and novelty of their subjects; but their almost universal lack of form or style prevented them from winning a permanent place in literature. Examples of this kind of work are J. B. Fraser's *The Kuzzilbash* and *Persian Adventurer;* the anonymous *East India Sketchbook* and *The Baboo and other Tales;* W. B. Hockley's *Pandurang Hari* and *Tales of a Zenana*, and, lastly, Meadows Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug. Pandurang Hari* is admirably graphic and true to life, but reminds the reader of a

picture of a landscape which has been chosen at haphazard and faithfully reproduced without regard to artistic effect. *Tales of a Zenana*, Hockley's best book, is a collection of Eastern tales, connected by a thin thread of plot. They are strongly reminiscent of *The Arabian Nights*, and were, at the time of their production, estimated as their superior by an over-enthusiastic reviewer. The abundant wit and liveliness of the tales is their chief characteristic. Hockley has received less attention than he deserves. His *Tales of a Zenana* was undoubtedly the greatest achievement in the sphere of fiction which Anglo-Indians produced before the appearance of Meadows Taylor's *Tara*. In his depiction of the Mahratta character he was far more accurate than Meadows Taylor, who tended to idealize his types. *Pandurang Hari* may be artistically crude, but as a picture it is wonderfully accurate. The quaintness and simplicity of the rogue who is the hero of the latter story, is most attractive and lifelike. Hajji Baba has been called the Gil Blas of the East. A writer has remarked that, if this be so, Pandurang Hari is the Anastasius of India. Of the re-

maining early works of this nature *The Confessions of a Thug* alone deserves special mention. Its publication in 1839 created a sensation both in India and England, not so much through its literary qualities as through the sensational nature of the incidents which it narrated. *The Confessions* purported to be the autobiography of one of those notorious disciples of Bhavani, with whom murder by the " roomal " was a religious rite as well as a hereditary profession. Ameer Ali, the Thug who relates the story, says he had garrotted seven hundred men and only regretted that he had not reached four figures. It is a gruesome tale graphically narrated, and gained the greatest notoriety of all the early Anglo-Indian writings.

Meadows Taylor was the first great name in the history of Anglo-Indian fiction. His fame rests, not on *The Confessions of a Thug*, which, though it first brought him a reputation, stands entirely apart from the rest of his work, but upon the series of splendid historical tales which he subsequently wrote. *Tippoo Sultan*, which he wrote in 1840, gave a foretaste of his skill in this

direction. It was a story of the Mysore War of 1788-89 and embodied a detailed account of the time. But it was not till twenty years later that Meadows Taylor consummated his fame. He then produced the first of that trilogy of historical novels which comprised *Tara*, *Ralph Darnell*, and *Seeta*. There was a curious link connecting the three. The year 1657 saw the revolt of the Mahrattas and the victory of Sivaji at Bijapur, which laid the foundation of their dominance of India; 1757 saw the Mahratta power finally replaced by that of the British at Plassey; 1857 was the year of the Mutiny. These three events, occurring so strangely at intervals of exactly one hundred years, supply the central themes of three powerful tales. *Tara* presents the reverse side of the Mahratta character to that which *Pandurang Hari* had displayed, and the latter is the truer; for *Tara* clothes the Mahratta character with chivalry, and glosses over the treachery and craftiness which *Pandurang Hari* had displayed. The heroine, Tara, is a noble conception, though, considering the period, a little anachronistic. *Ralph Darnell* contains, among

other incidents, a graphic account of the Black Hole of Calcutta; while *Seeta* depicts the horrors of the Mutiny, and shows how the prediction that the East India Company should come to an end one hundred years after Plassey was literally fulfilled. *A Noble Queen*, which appeared in 1878, was the last of Meadows Taylor's novels, and is the story of the heroism of Queen Chand Bibi, who, in the sixteenth century, resisted the Mogul armies and saved the town of Bijapur.

These tales are very long and, like most of the novels of fifty years ago, very leisurely and at times heavy. As stories they sometimes lack interest; but as pictures of native life and customs they have never been excelled. *Tara* was, upon its appearance, characterized as the most successful novel of native life ever published. As regards fidelity and accuracy, Meadows Taylor occupies an anomalous position. With respect to the manners, customs and conditions of the times of which he wrote he is strictly, almost pedantically, correct; but in his characters he is an idealist. The open, frank character with which he endows

the Mahrattas found little counterpart in real life; while it may be justly doubted whether two such Hindu women as Tara and Seeta could have existed at the times to which they are allocated. To create and sustain interest, he gave his chief characters such attributes as are met with in the most noble of civilized races. On the side of his heroes he wished to enlist our highest emotional sympathies, with a view to maintaining the interest of the tale. Literal accuracy was sacrificed to romantic interest, and the result is that Meadows Taylor's novels, though in most respects an accurate delineation of native life, possess in regard to native character the value of an idealized picture rather than that of a realistic photograph. To make them acceptable to English readers, some such compromise was inevitable; and it was made in such a way as materially to enhance the artistic value of his work.

This type of novel, so fruitful in its possibilities, was not developed after the author's death. Most of the later historical novels deal with modern times, and contain so large an admixture of Anglo-Indian interest that they are best described as novels

of Anglo-Indian life. The clue suggested by Meadows Taylor was mainly followed up on the basis of the novel of modern native life and manners.

It is said that nothing is more difficult of attainment than a thorough insight into native life. Superficial knowledge is easy to acquire, but seldom goes below the surface. Perhaps it is owing to this fact that so few have attempted this form of fiction. Successes like *In Black and White* and *Kim* are rare. A comparative exception was *The City of Sunshine*, by Alexander Allardyce, who subsequently wrote *Balmoral* and *Earl's Court*, two novels of English life. The scene in *The City of Sunshine* is laid in the village of Dhupnagar. Much of the interest is religious, and a lurid light is brought to bear on the problem of caste, as well as on those of education, justice, the betrothal of infants, money-lending, and similar questions. The picture of the young Hindu student rebelling against the superstitious faith of his fathers, but finally drawn back into it by the cords of love and interest, is very fascinating, and shows a deep knowledge of the manner in which religious

questions are presenting themselves to modern India. Mrs F. A. Steel's romances deal mainly with Anglo-Indian life; but in *From the Five Rivers*, *Tales of the Punjaub*, *The Flower of Forgiveness* and *In the Permanent Way*, she has produced some miscellaneous stories and sketches of Punjaub native life. The actors in the stories are types rather than actual people, but the tales display a very accurate knowledge of native habits and ways of thought. Other works demanding mention are *Eight Days* and *The Bond of Blood*, by Mr R. E. Forrest, the latter of which was founded on the author's knowledge of the customs and feelings of the Rajputs; *Silent Gods and Sun-Steeped Lands*, a collection of tales by Mr R. W. Frazer, published in 1895; and *A Princess of Islam*, a tale describing life in a native state, by Mr J. W. Sherer. Most of the stories of this type are accurate and informing; but with the exception of those of Rudyard Kipling and Mrs Steel they have not shown that all-pervading Oriental atmosphere and feeling so essential to work of this kind, if it is to become a work of art rather than merely a faithful, though clever, portrait.

It is, however, in the novel of Anglo-Indian life that the greatest success has been achieved. The transition from the conventional "letters" to the novel of Anglo-Indian manners can be traced in *Oakfield*, or *Fellowship in the East*, by W. Delafield Arnold, brother of Matthew Arnold. It was published in 1853 and hardly takes the artistic form demanded of a novel. It is a tale of an Oxford man, brought up in strict ideas of duty and conduct, who goes to India and revolts from the dissipation of the Anglo-Indian community and their disregard of the interests of the natives. The Second Sikh War and the battle of Chillianwallah are described in the course of the tale. A high moral purpose pervades the book, which marked the commencement of this type of fiction. Exactly in contradistinction to Arnold's treatment of the vices of Anglo-Indians was that of John Lang, who, in *The Wetherbys*, *Too Clever by Half*, and other novels, took a delight in exposing them in their ugliest colours, and lashed them with the most caustic satire. His point of view is different from that of Arnold, as he is willing to get all the amuse-

ment he can out of the moral failings of the British in India before giving them the satiric *coup-de-grâce*. The author draws a very dark picture, though such a character as that of the young subaltern who "had great luck in the shape of promotion," owing to four seniors drinking themselves to death, suggests that he is prone to exaggerate, like all satirists.

Between John Lang and the more famous and prolific writers of the close of the century, there is interposed a vast quantity of somewhat indifferent fiction, which was only now and then relieved by something out of the common. Florence Marryat (Mrs Ross Church), who never liked India, revenged herself in *Véronique* and *Gup*, for nine years' exile. She did not spare the country, which she called the "nursery of bigotry, prejudice and small-mindedness," "the Juggernaut of English domestic life." *Ida Craven*, by Mrs Cadell, authoress also of *Worthy*, is a somewhat colourless tale of frontier life. But the two greatest names of this middle period are those of Sir George T. Chesney and Sir Henry S. Cunningham. Both were the

authors of several novels. One of the former's most famous tales is *The Battle of Dorking*, but from our point of view *A True Reformer* and *The Dilemma* are the most important. *A True Reformer* is only partly Anglo-Indian in subject, and exhibited the author's skill in analysing character and motives. *The Dilemma*, however, is his Anglo-Indian masterpiece. It dealt, as did so many Anglo-Indian novels of this period, with the Mutiny of 1857. It contains an account of the defence of a lonely moffussil station, in which the heroes of the story fought desperately against odds, and displays no mean dramatic and descriptive power. As we read the story, we are able to visualize events that have before been nothing but a name to us. A sustained and powerful love interest runs throughout the book. At the outset we laugh at the hopeless infatuation, comic to the reader, though tragic to the lover, of the young subaltern Yorke for Olivia, the daughter of a highly placed civilian. To her young Yorke is nothing, but we hear, with a little alarm for her future happiness, that she is in love with Kirke, a ne'er-do-well officer, cashiered for

malpractices. Eventually she marries Falkland, an old friend of her father, many years her senior. The outbreak of the Mutiny causes all things to be forgotten, and Kirke by his gallant bearing reinstates himself and his honour. Then follows the defence of the up-country station, of which Falkland is the leading spirit. Their losses are considerable, and they are at the last gasp when Kirke, at the head of a flying squadron, relieves them. In the final struggle of the blockade Falkland is seen to fall, and does not appear again, being given up for dead. Upon the cessation of hostilities Yorke, whom the Mutiny has raised to a colonelcy, thinks of further advances toward Falkland's widow, but she marries Kirke. Kirke indulges in embezzlement and other malpractices, such as had brought him into trouble before, and has to resign his commission once again. He goes utterly to the bad and deserts Olivia, who goes to England. In the meantime Falkland had not died, though his wounds, mutilations, and other awful experiences during and subsequent to the skirmish in which he fell, bereft him of his reason for some years.

Later on he becomes somewhat sane, and goes to England, though he determines, Enoch Arden-like, never to meet his wife or let her know that he is alive. He cannot, however, resist the temptation to live near her; and as his scars and mutilations make him unrecognizable, he does so with impunity. The occurrence of a fire at Olivia's house, however, at which Falkland attempts to rescue her and is mortally injured, leads to recognition. Falkland dies, tended by his half-demented wife, who subsequently goes mad and drowns herself. The story closes in an intensity of gloomy tragedy.

The Dilemma is not, like so many other Anglo-Indian novels, a mere colourless picture of Anglo-Indian life. It possesses great emotional power, fidelity to life, insight into human nature, and the greatest consistency of detail; there is, owing to the character of the central theme, plenty of exciting incident; while the love interest is skilfully managed and well-worked out, Yorke, Falkland and Kirke forming three real and distinct types of lovers. Incidentally we obtain a very real picture of what the Mutiny meant to moffussilites who had

not time to concentrate in a big town; while the study in madness at the end of the book, when Olivia's brain at last gives way before her sorrows, brings to our ears a faint echo of the ravings of an Ophelia. From all points of view the book takes first rank among Anglo-Indian novels.

Equally good, though in a different way, was *The Chronicles of Dustypore*, by Sir H. S. Cunningham. It is a light, irresponsible sort of tale, describing Anglo-Indian official and social life in a remote station of the Sandy Tracts, where sand is abundant, especially in the heads of the officials, and at Simla. It is a satirical comedy which, unlike much of this kind of work in India, took the form of fiction instead of that of the essay. Maud is a pleasing, if irritatingly foolish, kind of girl; Sutton a rather dull heroic sort of person; Desvoeux is a real creation, though a little impossibly clever. Comparison with *The Dilemma* is impossible, for the two novels are of an essentially different type. *The Dilemma* deals with the deeper emotions, and faces the darker things of life. *The Chronicles of Dustypore* remains all the time upon the surface. The

story is a pleasing idyll, and does not set out to be more. The characters have, perhaps, too great a store of epigram and too large a reserve of apt quotation to be natural, but the story is a success in that it tells a simple tale well, and contrives at the same time to be amusing in a careless, holiday sort of fashion. Sir Henry Cunningham's other Anglo-Indian book, *The Coeruleans*, which he calls "a vacation idyll," is equally amusing and irresponsible. It tells of the way in which the inhabitants of Coerulea, i.e., some pleasant hill station, exist. Camilla, the chief creation of the book, is the exact opposite of Maud. Here again only the surface emotions are stirred, without any attempt at anything more. The plot is exceedingly simple, but the tale is exceedingly clever. The smartness of conversation is the chief characteristic of Sir Henry Cunningham's work, both Anglo-Indian and English, and reminds the reader strongly of the novels of Miss Thorneycroft Fowler, though the cleverness of the conversation in his novels is perhaps a little more natural than that of Miss Fowler's work. This keenness of dialogue, combined

with a light, airy way of looking at life, distinguishes Sir Henry Cunningham's work from much of the rest of the fiction. The Anglo-Indian temperament has two entirely opposite main phases, the gloomy and the gay. To the one, works like *The Dilemma* were congenial; the other found *The Chronicles of Dustypore* more to its taste.

But British India had to wait till the last twenty years of the century for its greatest writers of fiction. Rudyard Kipling, the greatest of all, will receive discussion later. It is enough here to say that the *Plain Tales from the Hills*, the so-called "Rupee" books, and *Kim*, have given stay-at-home Englishmen a clearer insight into the main features of Anglo-Indian and native life than any of their numerous and ponderous predecessors in the task. They do not, except in the case of *Kim*, give a complete consistent portrait, but pick out the salient points and emphasize them. The other important name is that of Mrs F. A. Steel, who is, perhaps, the greatest novelist, in the strictest sense of the word, of whom Anglo-Indian literature can boast. Others deserv-

ing mention are Mrs Croker and Mrs Everard Cotes. The part which women have played in the recent fictional literature of India is very remarkable. When compared with the numerous, and, in many cases, excellent productions of these authoresses, the few novels written by men, such as H. M. Durand's *Helen Treveryan* and Greenhow's *The Bow of Fate*, shrink into insignificance. Mrs Steel is, of course, the greatest of the three. All of them aimed at painting, the light and shade of Anglo-Indian life, but in no case are their interests solely confined to India. Mrs Steel occasionally returned to the home country, and especially to Scotland, for a plot. *Red Rowans* was the happiest fruit of this experiment. Mrs Croker, as being herself an Irishwoman, divided her energies between the Anglo-Indian and the Irish novel; while Mrs Everard Cotes strove to interpret the American girl to the world of fiction-readers, when she was not writing of Anglo-Indians.

Mrs Steel's first important novel of Anglo-Indian life was *Miss Stuart's Legacy*, which gave promise which was fulfilled

when, one year later, in 1894, she wrote *The Potter's Thumb*, which is a really powerful tale of native and English life. *On the Face of the Waters* was a tale of the Indian Mutiny which omitted most of its horrors. In 1900 *Voices of the Night* and *The Hosts of the Lord* were written. In these two latter, which were love-tales of Anglo-Indian life, the authoress took the opportunity of discussing various problems which are facing the British in India. Clever and interesting as they are, however, Mrs Steel's fame as a novelist, apart from her purely native sketches, rests on *The Potter's Thumb*. In that novel she created several characters who fade very slowly from the mind. With the exception of Mulvaney and Kimball O'Hara, Mrs Boynton is perhaps the most complete and clever study to be found in any Anglo-Indian story, though Mrs Hawksbee would have been superior to her, if her creator had given himself time to develop the character. Lewis Gordon, Rose Tweedie, George Keene, and above all Dan Fitzgerald, are also characters whom one does not quickly forget. Pathos reaches its depths when

George Keene does himself to death in a lonely up-country station, and is buried secretly by Dan Fitzgerald, who cables to his mother the merciful falsehood, "Cholera"; while the delirious excitement of Dan in the prospect of coming joy, and his tragic death on its very threshold, touch, within the limits of a single page, the highest and the lowest note of life's octave. Mrs Steel possesses the power of identifying herself with her characters, of mourning with them and of rejoicing with them, and so her portraits are essentially lifelike. But the verisimilitude of her work is enhanced by its artistic excellence. Mrs Boynton's character is not hastily struck out in the first few lines, but is slowly evolved during seven hundred pages. Scarce an incident is introduced which has not some direct bearing on the story and its climax. *The Potter's Thumb* is a work of art and puts Mrs Steel in the very forefront of Anglo-Indian novelists.

Mrs Croker's later work has been almost solely Irish. Her early novels, however, were based wholly or in part on the various features of life in India. *Proper Pride* ap-

peared in 1882, and was followed at intervals during the next ten years by *Pretty Miss Neville*, *Some one Else*, *A Bird of Passage*, *Diana Barrington*, *Two Masters*, *Interference* and, finally, some years later, *Angel*. In all of these novels there is plenty of clever characterization and dialogue. In *Interference*, for example, Major Malone and the quaint and good-natured, though somewhat forbidding, Miss Dopping, are very lifelike. But the total exclusion of all religious, political, or psychological problems, the monotonous persistence with which the story remains in one social strata, and the entire suppression of the authoress's own personality, tend to rob her stories of interest. Other limitations of Mrs Croker in these novels seem to be a certain disregard of the laws of dramatic effect, which leads her to introduce irrelevant events; and an occasional improbability of incident which is the stock characteristic of far weaker writers. The " deus ex machina," who kills off inconvenient characters, is far too much in evidence. Notwithstanding these defects, Mrs Croker is an interesting writer, and forms one of the select few who have

helped untravelled Englishmen to get a clear idea of the conditions of Anglo-Indian life.

Mrs Everard Cotes is primarily a satirist, of a Horatian rather than a Juvenalian type. Her earliest work, *The Letters of a Mem-Sahib*, displayed the lightness of touch which characterized all her subsequent work. Her non-Indian work, comprising *A Social Departure*, *An American Girl in London* and *A Voyage of Consolation*, dealt with the adventures of two unconventional American girls. Her Anglo-Indian reputation rests on *His Honour and a Lady* and *The Path of a Star*. The first of these tells the story of two Lieutenant-Governors, one of whom falls a martyr to his stubborn honesty, while the other won signal success through his hypocrisy. The story abounds with caustic satire. The second contains a graver treatment of life, though the story remains a comedy, and light sarcasm abounds. A group of Calcutta characters, including a young Salvationist, a brilliant actress, a Society lady, and two Oxford friends, get into a tangle from which the authoress has to rescue them. An

unconventionality of view, and a determination to see the silver lining which many of the clouds of life possess, mark all Mrs Cotes's work, which is a typical example of that lightness of touch and temperament which was also characteristic of the essayists.

Many Indian writers have gone outside India for their plots. A good example of these is General Sir Charles Napier, who, in his *William the Conqueror*, dealt in a less skilful way with the plot which Bulwer Lytton worked out in *Harold*. Other instances are *The Private Secretary* and *The Battle of Dorking*, by Sir G. T. Chesney; *Wheat and Tares*, *The Heriots* and other novels by Sir H. S. Cunningham; Mrs Croker's Irish stories and Mrs Steel's *Red Rowans*. As might have been expected, such departures from the usual Anglo-Indian themes have achieved no especial success, save possibly Mrs Steel's *Red Rowans* and one or two of Sir H. S. Cunningham's tales. A brilliant exception, however, is afforded by H. G. Curwen's *Zit and Xoe*, which appeared in 1886. It was a tale of the days when earth was young and man and woman first began to look with joy and wonder on

the beautiful world in which their lot was cast. It was the story of Adam and Eve from the Darwinian point of view. In the story we see man and woman when intellect and moral sense have just been evolved. The tale is not, of course, consistent. The author was neither a philosopher nor a scientist, but an artist. The picture, which often savours of *Paradise Lost*, shows us man in a state of primitive barbarism, with all the ugly features eliminated. Delicate humour, lively dialogue and beautiful description of natural scenery are the chief characteristics of the sketch, which is almost a prose idyll. *Lady Bluebeard* and *Dr Hermione* were Curwen's other works of fiction. Neither is a novel in the strictest sense. All that the author required was a thin thread of plot on which to hang clever talk, speculation, satire and discussion of various problems. Much is said, but little is done. Mr Curwen, who was primarily a journalist, was a humorist who chose fiction as his literary form, a humorist of that highest type which possesses the keenest insight into character. His men and women are always real, Mr Hicks and Zit among the men, Mrs Fonblanque, Dr Hermione

and Xoe among the women, being especially so. His description of England through Oriental spectacles can take its place beside Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*. As a satirist he takes high rank among Anglo-Indian writers. His sarcastic writings, as being actual records of travel set in a fictitious mould, gained him the title of the Anglo-Indian Sterne, though the simplicity of his style is the very reverse of Sterne's artificial brilliance.

We have reached the end of our review of Anglo-Indian fiction. To compress the discussion within the short limits of a single chapter, it has been necessary to omit many a name which has won no small success, especially in modern times, and to condense considerably the account of others in order to keep it within rigid limits. But even so it has been made abundantly clear that fiction is by no means the least of the various branches of Anglo-Indian literature. Rudyard Kipling, Mrs Steel, Sir H. S. Cunningham, Meadows Taylor, Sir G. T. Chesney, Hockley, A. Allardyce, Mrs Croker and Mrs Everard Cotes, not to mention other names, form a galaxy of

talent or genius of which no community so limited in number as that of the British in India need be ashamed. Even in face of the poetry of Rudyard Kipling and Sir Edwin Arnold, the satire of Iltudus Pritchard and Sir Ali Baba, and the humour of Robinson and Parker, we shall not be wrong if we say that it is in fiction that Anglo-Indian literature has not only won its greatest triumphs, but also maintained the highest level of excellence.

CHAPTER VIII

Rudyard Kipling as an Anglo-Indian Man of Letters—Conclusion

I have eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine;
The deaths that ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine.
Was there aught that I did not share
In vigil or toil or ease,—
One joy or woe that I did not know,
Dear hearts across the seas?

Departmental Ditties.

TO write anything new of Mr Kipling is to-day rather a difficult task. At least three books, and very possibly more, of formal criticism or appreciation of his work have appeared;* while Kiplingana, the uncouth term applied to the hundreds of

*They are: *Rudyard Kipling, An Attempt at Appreciation*, G. F. Monkshood, 1899. *Rudyard Kipling: A Criticism*, R. Le Gallienne, 1900. *Kipling Primer*, F. L. Knowles, 1900.

shorter articles upon Rudyard Kipling and his writings, which have been given to the world in magazines, journals, and similar periodical literature, have assumed formidable proportions. The present writer, however, ventures to hope that the attitude towards Rudyard Kipling's work which the scope of this essay presupposes will afford him a point of view which, even though it be not new, may yet be capable of affording some fresh insight into his many-sided genius.

And first let it be remarked that Rudyard Kipling is more truly Anglo-Indian than any other British Indian writer. For, in the first place, as is, of course, well known, he was the son of an Anglo-Indian father, the talented author of *Beast and Man in India;* secondly, though he left India at the age of five, he always regarded it as the natural sphere of his life's work; lastly, and most important of all, India was to him a home rather than a place of exile, a native rather than an adopted land. How loyal to the land, or rather to the city of his birth, is the note struck in the spirited dedication prefixed to *The Seven Seas:*

Surely in toil or fray
  Under an alien sky.
Comfort it is to say:
  " Of no mean city am I."
(Neither by service nor fee
  Came I to mine estate—
Mother of cities to me,
  For I was born in her gate,
Between the palms and the sea
  Where the world-end steamers wait).

Such was his tribute to Bombay, the city of his birth, and through Bombay to the whole land of India. To his work in India Rudyard Kipling brought an unlimited sympathy with the land which, from being the land of his birth, became, on his return in 1882, the land of his adoption. It is true that no one has ever more graphically painted the sorrows, the terrors, the discomforts and the cruelties of India than Rudyard Kipling. It is true, too, that if we search his writings we can find some very hard words about her whom he calls " the grim stepmother of our kind." But throughout there is a note of genuine sympathy with things Indian which is lacking in the work of many of his predecessors. Though we cannot but admit that the note of bit-

terness creeps in in his poem *Christmas in India;* admitted, too, that in *The Galley Slave,* the pent-up yearning breaks out into a despairing cry of pain; yet it differs from many of the dirge poems of others. Never does the cry reach the passionate acerbity of Webb's bitter taunt:

> Thy slaves and not thy sons are we.

Rudyard Kipling does what *The Calcutta Review* regretted Trego Webb did not do. He invests the life of the Anglo-Indian with "a new enthusiasm and dignity." Bitter enough, it is true, is that terrible verse:

> By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of clinging steel,
> By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars that never heal;
> By eyes grown old with staring through the sun-wash on the brine,
> I am paid in full for service,—

but at the close comes the note of enthusiasm:

> would that service still were mine!

and at the end of the poem the note of dignity:

But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse her service then?
God be thanked, whate'er comes after, I have lived and toiled with men.

In this last line we meet one of the definite notes which run through Rudyard Kipling's work—energy. Better far is it to do and die than to sit still and live a colourless existence. Long years afterwards this note, first expressed in *The Galley Slave* was heard in a statelier, deeper key:

Go, bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need.

It is this note, manly and dignified, which redeems much of Rudyard Kipling's pessimistic poetry from falling into line with the dirges of Webb, Leyden and Heber. He has always been willing, it is true, to " draw the Thing " as he has seen it; but, though not shirking the terrible side of the picture, he invested it with the halo of enthusiasm for duty which softened the gruesomeness of the details. Nothing but a real sympathy with India and her people could have been the source of this redeeming note.

As Rudyard Kipling was the most truly

Anglo-Indian of all Anglo-Indian literary men, so, too, despite his abandonment of India for a more central sphere of work, he has remained, if not primarily, at least, secondarily, an Anglo-Indian man of letters. And so it comes about that we have to judge Rudyard Kipling's place among Anglo-Indian literary men as much, if not more, by the work he has done in England since leaving India as by his strictly Indian work. His purely Indian work comprises *The Departmental Ditties*, the *Plain Tales from the Hills*, and the seven Rupee books, which went under the several titles of *Soldiers Three*, *The Story of the Gadsbys*, *In Black and White*, *Under the Deodars*, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, *Wee Willie Winkie* and *The City of Dreadful Night*. All his solely Indian work occupied only the space of little more than three or four years, commencing in 1886 with *The Departmental Ditties*. With regard to the rest of his work it is necessary to exercise discrimination in selecting that part of it which ought to be considered in estimating him as an Anglo-Indian man of letters. Books like *Captains Courageous*, *Stalky and Co.*, and

many or most of the poems in *The Five Nations* and *The Seven Seas* may be ruled out at once. Only those that bear the marked impress of his Anglo-Indian life can affect our judgment. Judging by this criterion, then, we are left, in addition to his actual Indian work, with the various stories possessing an Indian plot or atmosphere scattered through the collections of stories known as *Life's Handicap*, *Many Inventions* and *The Day's Work; The Barrack Room Ballads; Kim*, perhaps the greatest of its author's contributions to Anglo-Indian literature; and, finally, *The Jungle Books*, which, as being modelled on a well-established and prolific native type of literature, are very important from our present point of view.

"Young as he is," said Mr Richard Le Gallienne of our author in 1900, "and vigorous as he is likely to remain for many coming years, it is not unlikely that, section by section, he may make a complete picture of British and American rule, and so become the snapshot Balzac of Anglo-Saxon colonization, his gifts for getting up a country and its people are so exceptional.

Yet it seems unlikely, judging by his essays in new fields, that he will ever do, say America or Australia, as he has done India. Evident as is his notebook sometimes in his Indian sketches, it is less that than his subconscious experience and memory of the country that counts. There are, too, his father's affectionately acknowledged stores of Indian lore and anecdote to be remembered. One cannot be a boy in two countries at once, and there is no doubt that Mr Kipling's best work will always be Indian in subject, however heroically he may strive to span the octave of the globe."

This quotation from Mr Le Gallienne's book on Rudyard Kipling states the relative merits of the latter's Indian and non-Indian stories in an accurate and informing way. *Captains Courageous* and *The Light that Failed* are partial illustrations of the generalization here laid down by the critic; *Kim* has since been a fulfilment of the prophecy therein contained. Seldom has Rudyard Kipling, even partially, failed in an Indian story. Indeed, in an Indian story he practically cannot fail, for he knows India through and through, and imperfect ac-

quaintance is the sole cause of his non-success wherever he has failed. Rudyard Kipling is, to quote Mr Le Gallienne again, "evidently a born story-teller. The last minstrel of the bar-parlour, the fish-liar of the smoking-room, the flash-light man of American journalism, the English 'public-school' man who brilliantly don't-you-knows his way through a story: here were all these, plus that 'something, something,' of genius that makes 'not a fourth sound but a star.'"

Thus Mr Le Gallienne, Rudyard Kipling's sternest critic. *The Departmental Ditties* were undoubtedly clever, and the genius lurking behind their farce and pathos gave their author his first start on the road to fame. But what he had done in the Ditties, many a predecessor had accomplished, albeit a little less cleverly. But in his short stories of Indian life, as Mr Le Gallienne and all others allow, he stands alone. Others had painted the leisurely canvas, with more or less success; here was one who brilliantly dashed off the lightning sketch. In the list of Anglo-Indian novelists Rudyard Kipling has no real claim to

stand; but, none the less, in *The Plain Tales from the Hills*, the various "Rupee" books that followed, and his occasional subsequent Indian tales, he did for Anglo-India what a score or more of her novelists had essayed to do. They were not elaborate pieces of character-drawing, for Rudyard Kipling is not a novelist, but momentary cinematographic pictures. *The Plain Tales*, *Under the Deodars*, and *The Story of the Gadsbys*, gave flash-light scenes of the gaieties and intrigues of Simla; *The Phantom Rickshaw* collection revealed some of the mysterious things of India; *Wee Willie Winkie* some of its pathos; *Soldiers Three* drew a well-balanced picture of the British soldier in India off parade, while the Indian stories in *Life's Handicap*, *Many Inventions* and *The Day's Work* continued the task of depicting Anglo-Indian life, this time more definitely for English readers at home. Such stories as *The Taking of Lungtungpen* and *The Arrest of Lieutenant Golightly* reach the heights of farce; those like *A Bank Fraud* the depths of pathos; *The Bridge-Builders* is intense in its suggestiveness, *The Story of the Gadsbys* dominant in its omniscience

and insight. In the Mulvaney stories we have a welcome reaction from the typical red-coated hero of English fiction; in Strickland and Mrs Hawksbee we see some of the peculiar products of Anglo-Indian life. But it is hopeless to attempt to deal with the tales in detail within the space of a single chapter. Suffice to say that in them, as a collection, is to be found depicted with wonderful vividness almost all the detail of everyday Anglo-Indian life, its routine, its comedy, its tragedy, its marvels and its heroics. Unrivalled though the collection is of its kind it is not, of course, faultless. The diligent seeker after blemishes will find irritating mannerisms scattered throughout the earlier work; there, too, he will find that cynicism of spirit which Rudyard Kipling has but slowly outgrown. To charges like these, the appreciator of Kipling must silently bow assent. But when the critic renews the old accusation of "Departmentalism," we close issue with him. A few of the tales are, without doubt, of merely an ephemeral, local interest; but most are universally human. Mrs Hawksbee and Mulvaney are no isolated eccentricities,

even though they are to some extent the product of their peculiar environment. They are actuated by the emotions which actuate all men and women, and these universal emotions, acting in a peculiar atmosphere and surroundings, produce peculiar results. Certain it is that these tales have their defects; but just as certain is it that their merits outweigh their defects. Let us, if we will, with Mr Le Gallienne, censure the unabidingness of the characters and the ease with which they fade from the memory; let us, too, if we wish, let loose the vials of our wrath upon the obtrusive, irritating omniscience of Rudyard Kipling's early work. Let us also, again with Mr Le Gallienne, complain of the undiluted journalism which occasionally spoilt his stories. When all has been said, however, as to his real or alleged defects, the fact remains that in Rudyard Kipling India gave to British letters its greatest master of the short story and enabled English literature in this respect to take its stand without shame beside the literature of France and America.

These tales are the work on which Rud-

yard Kipling's purely Anglo-Indian reputation is mainly based. *The Departmental Ditties*, which have already been discussed, for all the genius which they occasionally exhibit, are little more than topical, save poems like *The Galley Slave*, and can give their author no permanent fame. The rest of the work on which our estimate must be based was written after the close of their author's Indian career.

Rudyard Kipling's greatest work as a poet cannot be said to be Anglo-Indian. *The Recessional*, *A Song of the English*, and *The White Man's Burden*, belong, not to Anglo-Indian, but to English literature, and place their author on a higher pedestal as uncrowned laureate of Imperialism. Most of the *Barrack Room Ballads*, however, are local rather than imperial. Though addressed broadly to Thomas Atkins, they are addressed more strictly to Thomas Atkins in India, and most of the incidents and illustrations are Indian. Though the ballads do not belong to the highest class of poetry, it may truly be said that their author has never written anything that, in the sheer music of the verse, surpasses them. Even the mere

reading of songs like *Gunga Din*, *Loot*, *Mandalay*, *Troopin'*, and *Ford of Kabul River*, seems to set the foot tapping to an imaginary tune. Less musical, but more important from the present point of view, are some of the " other verses " bound up with the ballads. *The Ballad of East and West* is a well-told tale of two strong men who fought so mightily that in the end they loved; for though

East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet,

yet

there is neither East nor West, Border nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth.

Other tales like *The Last Suttee*, *The King's Mercy*, *The King's Jest*, *With Scindia to Delhi*, *Boh da Thone*, and *The Sacrifice of Er-Heb*, reveal their writer's mastery of the grim, the ironical and the tragic. In these poems, curiously enough, Rudyard Kipling remains a story-teller, which is the capacity in which he is, in general, happiest. In them too, appear many of the characteristics

which mark his stories. In the simplest of his phrases there is often a grim intensity of meaning. In *The Ballad of the King's Mercy*, for instance, the spectacle of Yar Khan writhing beneath the mound, the while the spectators pityingly cry to the king:

> Protector of the Pitiful, give orders that he die.

is full of the most tragic irony, and is a creation well worthy of its maker, as, too, is that of Wali Dad, in *The Ballad of the King's Jest*, ringed with bayonets, watching for the foe that never came. How grim is the constant refrain:

> Heart of my heart, is it meet or wise
> To warn a king of his enemies?

Verily, for Wali Dad 'twas not so!

Notwithstanding, however, Rudyard Kipling's successes in the *Barrack Room Ballads* and the *Departmental Ditties*, it is as a prose-writer that he holds chief place among Anglo-Indian literary men. This was true even before he left India in 1890, and the two *Jungle Books* and *Kim* have since confirmed this generalization. The position of the former in Anglo-Indian

literature is both unique and important. In general, between the literary spirit of England and India, there has always been a great gulf fixed, a constant alienation. There has been no true marriage between them. Anglo-Indian literature can in no sense claim to be the genuine offspring of the two. The two *Jungle Books* have removed the reproach; for the animal story is indigenous to India, and has been brought to great perfection there. Rudyard Kipling has in these *Jungle Books* united the best characteristics of English and native literature. The result is no mere weakling graft, no mere bastard hybrid. The story of Mowgli, not to speak of the remainder, captivates from the outset. The *Jungle Books* are masterpieces and are real additions to English literature. With regard to Rudyard Kipling's other work opinions differ, but in judging of these *Jungle Books* few perhaps will dissent from Mr Le Gallienne when he says that they are " not unlikely the most enduring things Mr Kipling has written." They are at all events the most truly Anglo-Indian of all British Indian productions. The son of the author of

Beast and Man in India showed in these *Jungle Books* that with beast as well as with man in India he was equally familiar.

Mr Le Gallienne's dictum, quoted above, appeared before the publication of *Kim*. It is possible that he would now modify it in view of that remarkable book. It is a book which one who knows nothing of India may read with the intensest enjoyment, but for such an one to seek to criticize it would be absurd. It has two main characteristics, its lack of plot and its profound knowledge of native life, religion and intrigue. It is in no sense a novel; even to call it a work of fiction is a little misleading. It belongs to none of the old forms of literature, but to the most modern development of literature, journalism. It is the greatest masterpiece of journalism by the greatest living journalist. In saying this we are in no sense disparaging. Kipling, Steevens and others have raised high-class journalism to the position of one of the foremost literary forms of the day. Kipling has lent the art of journalism something of the art of fiction, and *Kim* is the result. When all has been said, the fact remains that *Kim* is a sketch of native life in

India clothed in the flimsiest of fictional dresses. If we judge *Kim* as a novel, we are disappointed; if we judge it as a piece of descriptive writing, the reverse is the case. The characters are all types, except perhaps Kimball O'Hara himself; and the Anglo-Indian reader, as he peruses the book, recalls numerous figures analogous to the types contained in it. Yet, despite this, the characters are always clear-cut and never sketchy. The Buddhist Lama, seeking for the River of the Arrow in a land whose people had once worshipped his loved Lord, but had long since abandoned that faith, is a pathetic, lovable and wonderful figure. His intense and dominating yearning to be free from the Wheel of Life is well portrayed. If purity and simplicity of heart bring freedom from the Wheel, verily the Lama was nigh unto the blessedness of Nirvana. The other figures are likewise good. In reading of the Jat and his sick child, we obtain an insight into the cause of the prosperity of wandering beggars and priests. Mahbub Ali, the horse-dealer, Hurry Chunder Mookerjee, the Babu and Lurgan Sahib, the healer of sick pearls, all

remain fixed in the memory. Of Kim himself we need say little. From the first page, in which he appears, sitting on Zam-Zammah, with his father's " ne varietur " and clearance certificate, and his own birth-certificate, round his neck, till the last, on which he goes forth with Teshoo Lama to wash in the River of the Arrow, he fascinates us. In Kipling or out of Kipling, there is no character like him. With minor pieces of description the book abounds. Among them may be specially mentioned the wonderful description of a wonderful road, the Grand Trunk, and the Lama's account of the way in which his soul left his body and passed " beyond the illusion of Time and space and of Things." And so he found the River. " So thus the Search is ended. For the merit that I have acquired, the River of the Arrow is here. It broke forth at our feet, as I have said. I have found it. Son of my Soul, I have wrenched my soul back from the Threshold of Freedom to free thee from all sin, as I also am free, and sinless. Just is the Wheel. Certain is our deliverance. Come.

" He crossed his hands on his lap and

smiled, as a man may who has won Salvation for himself and his beloved."

It is a noble conclusion to a noble book. In 1900 few believed Rudyard Kipling capable of doing such work. The sustained loftiness of thought, the pervading mysticism of tone, and the extraordinary spiritual ecstasy displayed in the tale, exhibited on its appearance in 1901 a new phase of his genius. We yearn for more of this sort of work. Such interpretations of India are priceless. We prefer one *Kim* to a thousand *Islanders*. It is certain that it is of more permanent value to the Empire as well as to literature. Misunderstanding is the root of all dispute.

Rudyard Kipling's best work falls into four main divisions—his short stories, his imperial poetry, the *Jungle Books* and *Kim*. Of these all but his imperial poetry may justly be claimed as Anglo-Indian. That belongs to English literature proper, though naturally the influence of his Indian career is often felt, as, for instance, in the beautiful address of Madras in *A Song of the English:*

Clive kissed me on the mouth and eyes and brow,
Wonderful kisses, so that I became
Crowned above Queens,—a withered beldame now,
Brooding on ancient fame.

Anglo-India may justly be proud of having produced not only so great a man of genius as Rudyard Kipling, but also so strong a lover of the Empire. Carlyle thought that when Acts of Parliament, administrative prime ministers and all the paraphernalia of government, had proved unequal to the task of keeping the widespread Saxon race in virtually one nation, there would yet remain one link to preserve the tie inviolate, one King whom time or chance, Parliaments or combinations of Parliaments, could never dethrone—Shakespeare! British India has given to the Empire one who has determined to postpone by all means in his power the necessity of relying on so insecure a tie. Let apostles of so-called progress lament; but who shall say he is not wise? The day of great Empires is not yet over; if the British Empire falls, another will take its place, and amid the crash and rise of Empires misery stalks unchecked among

men. Rudyard Kipling is not always wise in his patriotism; but in his resolve that the British Empire must last until it has performed its self-appointed task he is entirely sensible. Yet a little longer shall Britain bear the White Man's burden; perchance she will reap his old reward:

> The blame of those ye better,
> The hate of those ye guard;

but, at all events, yet a little while she will continue to bring the hosts from bondage; and if she lays down the task, exhausted, before it is accomplished, for some other to complete, it will not be Rudyard Kipling's fault.

Vital though Rudyard Kipling's imperial poetry is in relation to India as being a part of the Empire, it is not of dominant importance from the standpoint of the present essay. And yet, in estimating him as an Anglo-Indian man of letters, we cannot neglect it. Patriotism is a universal emotion of humankind. Of old the greatest city of Greece perjured herself to claim as one of her own sons a lame bard who sang the warriors of unwalled Sparta to victory. If

Rudyard Kipling succeeds in rousing the men and women of the greatest of the world's empires to a sense of the responsibilities of greatness, Anglo-India may well rojoice to make her prouder and juster claim. But prouder still is the actual claim which she can make. English literature is in many respects the greatest of earth's literatures. It is to the eternal glory of India that of one of her cities the most striking living English literary genius can say with pride:

> Of no mean city am I,
> For I was born in her gate.

Proud, too, may India be of the fact that most of what we may well believe will be his most enduring work is so closely connected with her. We need not, with American pundits, ask, "Is Mr Kipling a classic?" With Mr F. L. Knowles we are content to reply: " Who knows or cares? His fate will probably be the common one:

> Some of him lived but most of him died,
> (Even as you or I).

But whether or not his tales or songs make any great permanent addition to English

literature, certain it is that they are stirring the emotions and influencing the thought of his contemporaries. Speculations as to their future fate may well be postponed for a generation. Suffice now to say, again with Mr Knowles, that "Mr Kipling's best work has all the elements of permanence, style, force, purpose and a true regard for moral values," the confusion of which vitiates so much good work. Empires come and go; outward circumstances alter, and much that seems important to-day is insignificant to-morrow. The onward progress of humanity will cause posterity to look back on the fret and struggle of nation with nation and empire with empire with wondering eye, even as now the ancient rivalry of city with city excites our surprise; but even then it may well be believed that Kipling will not be forgotten; for in humanity there are certain emotions that remain the same under all outward varying conditions, and to these Rudyard Kipling has given expression in a way which, in its individuality, marks him off from all who have preceded him. So much for his position in English literature. In Anglo-Indian literature he is

probably destined for many years to be the Colossus, beneath whose huge legs all other literary Anglo-Indians must crawl; and justly so, for in him, far more than in any other writer, is to be found that combination of the literary virtues of both races, English and Indian, which it should be the supreme aim of Anglo-Indian literature to achieve. Nothing is more easy than to become over-enthusiastic about Rudyard Kipling's work, and yet, despite the defects which undoubtedly mar some of his writings, we do not fear the charge of excessive eulogy, when we say that almost all preceding Anglo-Indian literary work must be considered as little more than a foil to exhibit the greatness of its greatest genius.

Our survey of the literature of British India is finished. We have seen wherein consists its weakness and its strength. We have seen how, in the sphere of poetry, it has generally been tinged with the exile's melancholy, but has often, stirred by a stronger spirit, devoted itself to the task of interpreting to Western readers the natural beauty and the religious life of India; while

not infrequently it has been animated by the spirit of national duty and patriotism. We have seen, too, how eager a welcome was granted to humour and satire, both prose and verse, owing to the natural reaction against the gloom of Anglo-Indian poetry. We have seen, finally, how in the sphere of fiction writer after writer sought to portray native or Anglo-Indian life with greater or less success, until one arose, greatest of them all, who deserted the beaten track, and in a series of short tales turned men's thoughts to the land of which he wrote. At first sight Anglo-Indian literature strikes the beholder as being a rather heterogeneous, formless, congeries of aimless and sometimes inarticulate utterances; but on examination it is found to concentrate itself on five main points. The first is the ever-present sense of exile; the second an unflagging interest in Asiatic religions, as well as in general religious speculation; the third consists of the humorous side of Anglo-Indian official life; the fourth in Indian native life and scenery; the last and perhaps most important, in the ever-varying phases, comic, tragic or col-

ourless, of Anglo-Indian social life. Within these rather circumscribed limits almost all Anglo-Indian imaginative literature will be found to fall. It will be seen that there are large deficiencies. Its tragic and its comic drama is almost negligible; in the sphere of the essay it has no Elia, breathing self-expression in every page—nay, in the truest sense, it has scarce any essayists at all; in poetry it has no honey-lipped Keats, no elemental force like the passionate Byron; an Indian Wordsworth or an Indian Burns is almost inconceivable. In the poetry of religious thought, in place of a Tennyson dimly groping toward the light, or a Browning confidently certain of the ultimate concent of apparent discords, we have only an Arnold seeking inspiration in an Eastern faith, and a Lyall, goallessly, though musically, speculative. Its fiction embraces a wider scope; but here again we seek in vain for many an English type of novel; while, except for some two or three names, the really informing tale of native life is seldom met with. Some of these deficiencies are due to the nature of the case; others, however, may be expected to be

made good in course of time. Anglo-Indian literature is yet in its infancy. As long as England's work in India continues, it will need an interpreter.

This literature histories of British India have hitherto disregarded. In general it has been no part of the life of the community. It has not in the past helped to knit together Anglo-Indians in a closer bond. It has been, in earlier times at least, an excrescence upon their life, not a vital, energizing, influence within it. This Rudyard Kipling and others have changed. Future histories of India must take account of Anglo-Indian literature. India is undergoing a strange transition, slow but certain, under British influence. By producing work which has been capable of giving literary expression to the meaning and process of this transition, and even in some slight measure of influencing it, Rudyard Kipling, Mrs Steel, Sir Alfred Lyall, and one or two others have at last brought Anglo-Indian literature into its rightful heritage. With Tennyson we like to believe that there is

> one far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves.

It is the work of the British Empire, among her many other tasks, to enable the backward races of the world to take one short step toward that final consummation. As a record of the thoughts, emotions, joys and sorrows of those who are guiding one-fifth of the human race as it painfully, falteringly, and yet, it is to be trusted, finally takes that single step, Anglo-Indian literature, its lesser names alike with its greater, can never entirely lack interest for students of humanity.

APPENDIX

A List of Anglo-Indian Works in the Domain of Fiction, Poetry, the Drama, Satire and Belles-Lettres

THE following list makes no claim to completeness. It is appended merely as a rough guide to those readers of this essay in whom the author may have been fortunate enough to stimulate an interest in Anglo-Indian literature. It is feared that much that is ephemeral or even worthless has found insertion; but, at the same time, it is believed that nothing of any great importance has been omitted.* The date appended is, in general, that of the edition possessed by the India Office Library, and unless otherwise stated may be taken to be the date of first publication; if that edition was published in India, the place of publication is given. The list is compiled, in the main, from the India Office Library Catalogue.

FICTION

ABBOTT, CAPT. J. The T'hakoorine. 1841.

ALLARDYCE, ALEXANDER. The City of Sunshine. 1877.

*At least, up to 1895, the date of the classified Supplement to the India Office Library Catalogue.

ANONYMOUS.
The Indian Heroine. Bombay. 1877.
The Bengalee, or Society in the East. Calcutta. 1843.
The Brahmin's Prophecy. By a Lady. Bombay. 1875.
The Morlands: A Tale of Anglo-Indian Life. 1888.
The Lover's Stratagem. Calcutta. 1889.
A Romance of Bureaucracy. By A.B. Allahabad. 1893.
A Romance of Indian Crime. By an Indian Detective. Calcutta. 1885.
How Will it End? Calcutta. 1887.
ARNOLD, W. D. Oakfield, or Fellowship in the East. 1853.
BETHAM, G. K. The Story of a Dacoity, etc. 1893.
CADELL, MRS.
Ida Craven. 1876.
Worthy. 1895.
CHESNEY, SIR G. T.
The Dilemma. 1876.
A True Reformer. 1873.
CHEW, MRS R. Nellie's Vows. Calcutta. 1888.
CHILLINGTON, F. C. Dual Lives. 1893.
COLQUHOUN, M. J. Primus in Indis. 1885.
CROKER, MRS B. M.
Proper Pride. 1882.
Pretty Miss Neville. 1885.
Some one Else. 1885.
A Bird of Passage. 1886.
Diana Barrington. 1888.
Two Masters. 1890.
Interference. 1891.

[Croker, Mrs B. M. *cont.*]
A Family Likeness. 1893.
Angel. 1901.
Cunningham, Sir H. S.
The Chronicles of Dustypore. 1877.
The Coeruleans. 1887.
The Heriots. 1890.
Sibylla. 1894.
Curwen, H. G.
Zit and Xoe. 1886.
Lady Bluebeard.
Dr Hermione. 1890.
Duncan, Sara J. (Mrs Everard Cotes).
The Simple Adventures of a Mem-Sahib. 1893.
His Honour and a Lady. 1896.
The Path of a Star. 1899.
Durand, Sir M. Helen Treveryan, or The Ruling Race. 1892.
Dutt, H. Bijoy Chand. Calcutta. 1888.
Fforde, Brownlow.
Maid and the Idol. Allahabad. 1891.
That Little Owl. Allahabad. 1893.
Field, Mrs E. M.
Bryda: A Story of the Indian Mutiny.
"Here's Rue for You." Calcutta. 1883.
Fletcher, Mrs H. A. Poppied Sleep: A Christmas Story. Calcutta. 1887.
Forrest, R. E. Eight Days. 1861.
The Bond of Blood. 1896.
Fraser, J. B.
Allee Neemroo: A Tale of Louristan. 1842.
The Kuzzilbash: A Tale of Khorasan. 1828.

FRAZER, R. W. Silent Gods and Sun-Steeped Lands. 1895.
GILLEAN. The Ranee: A Legend of the Indian Mutiny. 1887.
GLASGOW, GERALDINE. Black and White. Lucknow. 1889.
GREENHOW, SURG.-MAJOR H. M. The Bow of Fate. 1893.
HOCKLEY, W. B.
English in India. 1828.
Tales of the Zenana (published 1827). 1874.
Pandurang Hari: Memoirs of a Hindoo (published 1826). 1873.
JACOB, P. W. Hindoo Tales. 1873.
KAYE, J. W. Long Engagements: A Tale of the Afghan Rebellion. 1846.
KIPLING, RUDYARD.*
Plain Tales from the Hills. (Uniform Edition) 1899–1907.
Wee Willie Winkie, etc. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
Soldiers Three, etc. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
Life's Handicap. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
Many Inventions. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
The Day's Work. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
The Jungle Book. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
The Second Jungle Book. ,, ,, 1899–1907.
Kim. ,, ,, 1899–1907.

*It seems more convenient to adopt the Classification of the recent Uniform Edition of Rudyard Kipling's fiction in preference to the early classification of the Indian Railway Library.

Lang, John.
The Wetherbys. 1853.
My Friend's Wife, or, York, you're Wanted. 1859.
The Secret Police, or, Plot and Passion. 1859.
Will he Marry Her?
Too Clever by Half. 1853.
Levett-Yeats, S. The Widow Lamport. Allahabad. 1893.
Marryat, Florence.
Véronique. 1869.
Gup. 1868.
Napier, Gen. Sir Chas. William the Conqueror. 1858.
O'Beirne, Ivan.
Major Craik's Craze. Allahabad. 1892.
The Colonel's Crime. Allahabad. 1892.
Jim's Wife. Allahabad. 1889.
Doctor Victor. Allahabad. 1891.
Oldenbuck, A. Diana: A Legend of Spur and Spear. Lahore. 1889.
Ottley, T. H. Rustum Khan. 1831.
Owenson, Miss. The Missionary. 1811.
Prinsep, Augustus. The Baboo, and other Tales. 1834.
Pritchard, Iltudus T. How to Manage it. 1864.
Rafter, Capt. Savindroog, or, The Queen of the Jungle. 1848.
Reid, R.
Every Man his own Detective. Calcutta. 1887.
Revelations of an Indian Detective. Calcutta. 1885.
Taylor, Col. Meadows.
Confessions of a Thug. 1873.
Tara: A Mahratta Tale. (Second Edition). 1874.
Ralph Darnell. (Second Edition). 1879.

[Taylor, Col. Meadows, *cont.*]
A Noble Queen (published 1878). 1880.
Seeta. (Third Edition). 1880.
Tippoo Sultan: A Tale of the Mysore War. (published 1840). 1880.
The Fatal Armlet. Bombay. 1872.
Thomas, D. H. The Touchstone of Peril. 1887.
Schorn, J. A. Tales of the East. Allahabad. 1893.
Sherer, J. W. A Princess of Islam. 1897.
Sherring, Herbert. Light and Shade. Calcutta. 1889.
Sherwood, Mrs. Little Henry and his Bearer. Bombay. 1836.
Sinnett, A. P. Karma. (Third Edition). 1891.
Steel, Mrs F. A.
Miss Stuart's Legacy. 1893.
From the Five Rivers. 1893.
The Potter's Thumb. 1894.
Tales of the Punjaub. 1894.
The Flower of Forgiveness. 1894.
In the Permanent Way. 1897.
On the Face of the Waters. 1896.
Voices of the Night. 1900.
The Hosts of the Lord. 1900.
Steel, Mrs F. A. and Temple, R. C. Wide Awake Stories. Bombay. 1884.
Yoke-Wright, H. T. The Double Wedding. Dinapore. 1885.

POETRY

Aliph Cheem (Major W. Yeldham).
Lays of Ind. (Eighth Edition). 1888.
Basil Ormond and Christabel's Love. 1879.
Anonymous. Ex Oriente (Sonnets). 1858.

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Dream of a Star, etc., by R. F. F. Calcutta. 1855.
The Enchanted Fruit. Bombay. 1876.
The Goorkah, and other Poems. Calcutta. 1817.
India. By a Bengal Civilian. 1833.
Jagannath. Cuttack. 1878.
Echoes. Lahore. 1885.
Matheran. 1872.

Arnold, Sir Edwin. The Indian Song of Songs. 1875.
Pearls of the Faith, or, Islam's Rosary. 1883.
The Song Celestial, or, Bhagavad-Gita. 1885.
The Secret of Death, etc. 1885.
Lotus and Jewel. 1887.
The Light of Asia. 1888.
Indian Poetry. 1881.
The Light of the World. 1891.
With Sa'di in the Garden. 1888.

Atkinson, James. Soohrab and Rustan. Bombay. 1870.

Baillie, Mrs Joanna. Ahalya Baee. 1849.

Barlow, T. A Collection of Poems. Calcutta. 1887.

Bignold, T. F. Leviora, or, Rhymes of a Successful Competitor. 1888.

Bingham, Serjeant. The Field of Ferozeshah. 1849.

Boyle, Joseph B. S. Mariamne, and other Poems. Lucknow. 1889.

Burke, J. H. Days in the East. 1842.

Burt, Major T. S. Poems. 1853.

Campbell, Calder.
Lays from the East. 1831.
The Palmer's Last Lesson, etc. 1838.

Cantopher, W. E. The Anglo-Indian Lyre, and other Poems. Calcutta. 1868.

Carshore, Mrs W. S. Songs of the East. Calcutta. 1855
Case, S. F. Bhootanoo: A Satire. Calcutta. 1874.
Cruickshanks, William. The Pariah. A Didactic Poem. Madras. 1875
Derozio, H. L. V. Poetical Works (written 1827-31) Calcutta. 1871.
Dutt, G. C.
The Loyal Hours. Poems: Welcoming the Prince of Wales and Duke of Edinburgh on their advents to India, in 1869 and 1875. Calcutta. 1876.
Cherry Stones. Calcutta. 1881.
Dutt, H. C. Lotus Leaves. 1871.
Dutt, Shoshee Chunder. A Vision of Sumeru, etc. Calcutta. 1878.
Dutt, Toru. A Sheaf gleaned in French Fields. Bhowanipore. 1876.
Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan. 1882.
Eastwick, E. B. The Gulistan, or, Rose Garden of Shekh Muslihu'd-Din Sâdi of Shiraz. 1880.
Garrick, H. B. W. India. 1889.
Griffith, R. T. H. The Birth of the War God (Kalidasa). 1879.
Hart-Davies, T. Sind Ballads (translated from the Sindhi). Bombay. 1881.
Heber, Rt Rev. Dr R. Lines to His Wife; Evening Walk in Bengal; to be found in various editions of his Collected Poems.
Hobbes, R. G. The Soldier. Calcutta. 1843.
Holtham.
The Pleasures of Dreaming. Bombay. 1877.
Society: A Poem. Bombay. 1878.
Hoppner, J. Oriental Tales. 1805.

HUTCHINSON, JAMES. The Sunyassee, or, The Pilgrim of India. Calcutta. 1838.
JONES, SIR WILLIAM.
Poetical Works, with Life. 1807.
Works (complete). 6 vols. 1799.
KEENE, H. G.
Ex Eremo. 1855.
The Death of Akbar, etc. Allahabad. 1875.
Poems, Original and Translated. 1882.
Peepul Leaves. 1879.
Under the Rose. 1868.
Hic et Ubique. 1899.
KELLY, C. A.
Delhi, and other Poems. 1864.
The World's Martyrs. 1868.
KIPLING, RUDYARD.
Departmental Ditties, and other Verses. Various Editions, commencing with Calcutta. 1886.
Barrack Room Ballads. 1892.
Seven Seas. 1896.
Five Nations. 1903.
KUNTE, A. M. Risi. Poona. 1890.
LAUGHTON, MRS ARNOLD. Poems. Poona. 1867.
LESLIE, MISS MARY E.
Ina, and other Poems. Calcutta. 1856.
Sorrows, Aspirations and Legends from India. Calcutta. 1858.
Heart Echoes from the East. Calcutta. 1861.
LEYDEN, JOHN.
Poetical Remains, with Memoirs, by Rev. J. Morton. 1819.
Life and Poems of, by Thomas Brown. 1875.

[Leyden, John, *cont.*]
Poems and Ballads, with Memoir, by Sir Walter Scott and R. White. 1858.
Lyall, Sir Alfred. Verses written in India. 1889.
Macgregor, R. G. Indian Leisure. 1854.
Malabari, B. M. The Indian Muse in English Garb Bombay. 1876.
Malcolm, Sir J. Miscellaneous Poems. Bombay. 1829.
Masson, Charles. Legends of the Afghan Countries in Verse. 1848.
Mittra, P. C. The Spiritual Stray Leaves. Calcutta. 1879.
Monokur, Lall Byaskh. Sorrows of Memory. Calcutta.
Norton, J. B. Nemesis. Madras. 1860.
Memories of Merton. Madras. 1865.
Nowrosji, Vesuvala C. Courting the Muse. Bombay. 1879.
Parker, H. M. The Draught of Immortality. 1827.
Pritchard, Iltudus T. Poems and Parodies. 1860.
Rattray, R. Haldane. The Exile. 1830.
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Robinson, Rev. The Invisible World. 1844.
Stock, G. A. The Songs of Ind. Calcutta. 1872.
Thomas, G. P. Poems. 1847.
Waterfield, William. Indian Ballads, etc. 1868.
Webb, W. Trego. Indian Lyrics. 1884.
Willoughby, Raseim. Claude and Etheline, etc. Bombay. 1874.
Wright, Will. H. Death the Enemy, and other Poems. 1870.

THE DRAMA

ANONYMOUS.
Uvoya Shankata, or, The Horns of a Dilemma. A Farce.
Maid of the Mere. Madras. 1879.
Kaminee, the Virgin Widow. Calcutta. 1874.
Social Incubus Removed. A Farce. Lahore.
Which shall it be? Calcutta. 1877.
DATTA, MICHAEL M. Is this called Civilization? A Farce. Calcutta. 1871.
DAVIDSON, LT.-COL. C. J. C. Tara, the Suttee. 1851.
DOW, ALEXANDER.
Zingis: A Tragedy. 1769.
Sethona: A Tragedy. 1774.
HOBDAY, E. A. P. Ali Baba. Allahabad. 1883.
INNES, L. C. Rediviva. (Second Edition) Madras. 1877.
MCGRATH, MRS E. R. Maid of Cashmere. Calcutta. 1881.
PARKER, J. A. Ernest England: or, A Soul Laid Bare. 1897.
PIERCY, W. T. Our Indian Uncle: A Comedy. Lahore. 1879.
RAMASWAMI RAJU, P. V. Lord Likely. Madras. 1876.
THARP, THEODORE. A Cross Fire. Lahore. 1869.
THOMAS, G. P. Michele Orombello: or, The Fatal Secret. Bombay. 1852.
The Assassins: or, The Rival Lovers. Bombay. 1852.
WILLIAMS, T. A Farce. No. 1. Rewari. 1892

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ABERIGH-MACKAY, G. R. Twenty-one-Days in India, being the Tour of Sir Ali Baba. 1880.

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AITKEN, E. H. (E. H. A.).

Tribes on My Frontier. Calcutta. 1883.

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Behind the Bungalow. 1897.

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Furlough Reminiscences, by Wyvern. Madras. 1880.

Social Scraps and Satires, by Chili Chutnee. Bombay. 1878.

Adventures of Thomas Brown, a Griffin. Bombay. 1891.

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*These are given as typical examples of this class of work. The enumeration of the whole list would require a small volume to itself.

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